

SSA Honors Guide



What is the SSA Honors Program?

The SSA Honors Program invites awards nominations on an annual basis so that SSA can recognize individuals who have made stellar contributions to seismology.

The Honors Committee (HC) is a formal committee of the SSA Board of Directors and oversees the activities of these subcommittees. Chaired by a member of the Board of Directors, the Honors Committee is responsible for identifying and recruiting members to serve on its subcommittees that assess nominations for awards.

A separate Awards Encouragement Committee, whose members are recruited by the chair of the Honors Committee, encourages nominations and is unique in its ability to suggest names of potential nominees.

The chair, in consultation with the Society's president, recruits the members who serve on the Honors Committee, seeking a diversity of members who reflect the membership.

What are the responsibilities of the Honors Committee?

Established by vote of the Board in 2003, the Honors Committee (HC) oversees and encourages the activities of all Honors-related Subcommittees: the Reid Medal, the Richter Award, the Press Award and the Award for Distinguished Service to SSA. The two SSA representatives to the COSMOS/EERI/SSA Bolt Medal are also under the jurisdiction of the HC.

The HC consists of SSA members representing the diversity of the SSA community, including domestic and international members; members in academia, industry and government; and members at various stages in their careers. Committee members must be SSA members in good standing with SSA and may serve as the chairs of the subcommittees responsible for assessing nominations. The nominal term of service for all subcommittee members is three years.

HC responsibilities are: **1)** to populate Honors-related subcommittees, **2)** to create any additional rules, selection criteria and timetables beyond those mandated by the Board, necessary for the operation of the Honors-related subcommittees and **3)** to periodically review the functioning of the Honors Program and recommend changes, if needed, to better address the goals of the Society.

To stimulate nominations for SSA Honors, the SSA Awards Encouragement Committee (SAEC) will contact potential nominators representing a cross section of SSA membership. The HC and Award Subcommittee members will not suggest names of potential nominees.

What are the responsibilities of the SSA Awards Encouragement Committee?

To encourage a broad cross section of nominations and to reduce the potential for conflict of interest among the HC and its award subcommittees, the HC creates this separate committee to encourage nominations and, upon request, suggest names of potential nominees. This process ensures breadth in expertise and diversity in Honors nominees and nominators. The SAEC consists of five to six members of the seismological community covering a wide cross section of the Society. The SAEC or its individual members will not write any nominations itself, but will instead have conversations with Society members to develop and encourage award nomination submissions. After the nomination period has ended, this committee reports on its activities to the chair of the HC via a letter.

Other ways that conflicts of interest are avoided?

- Honors Committee members and SSA Award Encouragement Committee members may not write letters for SSA Award nomination packages.
- SSA Award subcommittee members may not write letters for nomination packages for the award their committee will vote on.
- SSA Board members may not write nomination letters for any of the SSA awards.

We recognize that SSA is a small community, and that it may be impossible to avoid absolutely all conflicts of interest. In decisions for every SSA award, HC and subcommittee members with a strong conflict of interest with one of the nominees (friend, close colleague, etc.) shall recuse themselves from participating in the selection of that nominee. They shall consult with the HC Chair if they are unsure. Members of the Board of Directors¹ who have contributed to any nomination package must recuse themselves from votes pertaining to the corresponding award.

What are the awards criteria?

Recognizing that the awards criteria need to be consistent with the values of the Society, the HC and its award subcommittee members may consider factors such as professionalism, in addition to technical merit and achievement when choosing awardees.

Honors Timeline

Recruitment of nominations for the Bolt Medal and the Joyner Lectureship occurs formally in May and June, with a nomination deadline of **30 June**.

Recruitment for all other SSA awards occurs in the summer, with the deadline of **30 September** for nominations.

Proposals for new awards are due **1 January**.

When is awards-related information announced and when are the awards presented?

The award eligibility criteria and nomination instructions are posted on the SSA website and in SSA print and electronic communications.

Awardees are announced by SSA as soon as possible after selection and receipt of disclosure statements. Awardees are honored at the SSA Annual Meeting.

For the Reid Medal, SSA's highest honor, a nomination citation and awardee response are given along with the medal. At the discretion of the Executive Director, short nomination citations and responses for the Richter Early-Career, the Frank Press Public Service and the Distinguished Service awards may also be shared at the SSA awards ceremony and published in *SRL*.

How to submit a nomination package?

The components required for each nomination package are described under the sections below pertaining to each award.

A signed nominator disclosure form signed by the chief nominator must be included with every submission.

The **Ethics Disclosure Form for Nominators** can be found on every webpage describing each award.

Nomination packages must be submitted by the advertised nomination deadline (**30 September**) via email to awards@seismosoc.org. Nomination packages shall be provided as single attachments to the email using zipped files if multiple supporting documents are included in the package. Acceptable document formats are .txt., .docx or .pdf. While electronic submissions are encouraged, hard copies may be mailed to:

Secretary, Seismological Society of America
c/o Nan Broadbent
400 Evelyn Ave, Suite 201
Albany, CA 94706-1375

¹ A new Board member may have contributed to a nomination prior to being elected to the Board. In these cases, a joint decision by the Honors Chair, Society President and SSA Secretary will determine whether the Board member must recuse themselves.

The Harry Fielding Reid Medal

Award Criteria

The Harry Fielding Reid Medal, SSA's highest honor, is awarded no more than once a year for outstanding contributions in seismology or earthquake engineering.

Award Eligibility

The medal may be awarded to any individual with the exception of a Director, Director-elect or Officer of the SSA Board of Directors at the time of the nomination deadline.

Nomination Procedures

The chief nominator must be an SSA member who is eligible to submit a nomination. Any member of SSA may nominate a candidate for this award, with the exception of members of the Reid Medal Subcommittee, SSA Board of Directors and SSA Award Encouragement Committee.

A nomination package shall consist of a letter of nomination of no more than two pages that summarizes the nominee's significant accomplishments and at least two but no more than five letters of support, with at minimum two letters originating from members of the Society.

Further:

- Non-members of SSA may co-sign letters of support or originate letters.
- Letters may have multiple authors, but the total number of authors summed across all support letters must not exceed 10.
- Letters of support may be no longer than two pages.

Optionally, the package may include a curriculum vitae and bibliography in support of the nominee.

The Reid Medal Subcommittee shall attempt to ensure that up to four and no fewer than two nominees are put forward for consideration by the Board for the medal annually. If the subcommittee feels there is no qualified recipient, they will recommend that no award be conferred that year.

Any unsuccessful nomination may be considered again in the following year's award cycle without resubmission of the nomination package if requested by a nominator before **30 September** of that year. To be reconsidered in subsequent years (beyond the year immediately following the original nomination), a new nomination package must be submitted. The Executive Director will contact nominators via email prior to **30 September** to confirm willingness for reconsideration of a package for a second year.

Awardee Selection

The Board of Directors will select the recipient of the medal from among the two to four nominees provided to the Board from the Reid Subcommittee, unless no nomination is forwarded by the subcommittee. The HC may review the procedures and/or act in an advisory capacity to the subcommittee. The HC, the SSA Board and staff shall keep names of nominees and nomination materials confidential.

The Award

The medalist receives an inscribed bronze medal.

Subcommittee Membership

The subcommittee consists of six persons, including the chair. All subcommittee members must be SSA members. One member of the subcommittee, preferably the chair, shall also be a member of the HC. Subcommittee membership may include no more than two past medalists and would ideally include early-career and mid-career SSA members. Normal term of service is three years, with the chair serving for two years.

The Charles F. Richter Early-Career Award

Award Criteria

The Richter Award honors outstanding contributions to the core purpose of the Society by a member early in their career and is given no more than once a year. An awardee's contributions shall advance seismology and/or the understanding of earthquakes for the benefit of society and reflect the core values of SSA.

Award Eligibility

Nominees must satisfy the following criteria: **1)** they must be regular or honorary members of the Society in good standing and **2)** their most recent academic degree must have been awarded no more than six calendar years prior to the year in which they receive the award. (Family or medical leave, if provided by the candidate's institution and taken by the nominee during this six-year period, can extend the six-year period.) No individual who is a Director, Director-elect or Officer of the Board of Directors at the time of the nomination deadline shall be eligible for nomination. Members of the Richter Subcommittee are similarly ineligible for nomination.

Nomination Procedure

The chief nominator must be an SSA member who is eligible to submit a nomination. Any member of SSA may nominate a candidate for this award, with the exception of members of the Richter Subcommittee, SSA Board of Directors and SAEC.

The nomination package shall contain: **1)** a letter of nomination no more than two pages long that establishes the nominee's eligibility and summarizes the nominee's significant accomplishments, **2)** a curriculum vitae including bibliography, **3)** two to four supporting letters no more than two pages long, including at least two letters from individuals who are not currently employed at the nominee's current institution nor the institution from which the nominee received their most recent degree. Any unsuccessful nomination may be considered again in the following year's award cycle without resubmission of the nomination package if the nominee still meets eligibility requirements and their reconsideration is requested by a nominator before **30 September** of that year. To be reconsidered in subsequent years (beyond the year immediately following the original nomination), a new nomination package must be submitted. The Executive Director will contact nominators via email prior to **30 September** to confirm willingness for reconsideration of a package for a second year.

Awardee Selection

The Richter Subcommittee will seek one qualified recipient for the award to recommend to the Board. If the subcommittee feels there is no qualified recipient, they will recommend that no award be conferred that year. If the subcommittee cannot decide between two nominees, the subcommittee may forward two names to the Board for vote. After making its selection, the subcommittee shall write a letter to the Board containing: **1)** a list of all nominees; **2)** the proposed recipient; **3)** some text briefly explaining the nominee's characteristics that justify the subcommittee's decision; **4)** optionally, if deemed necessary, some text listing in general terms, without naming names, the reason the proposed recipient was preferable to the other candidates; and **5)** a brief description of the selection process. The subcommittee will provide this letter to the HC Chair who will forward the letter and nomination package for the proposed recipient to the Executive Director. The Board will vote up or down on the proposed recipient.

The HC does not review the subcommittee decisions, except in the case that two nominations are forwarded for vote. The HC may review the procedures and/or act in an advisory capacity to the subcommittee. The HC, the SSA Board and staff shall keep names of nominees and nomination materials private.

Honors Guide, *continued*



The Award

The Richter Awardee receives a cash award from William B. Joyner Memorial Fund.

Subcommittee Membership

Six persons, including the chair, serve on this subcommittee. All subcommittee members must be SSA members. One member of the subcommittee, preferably the chair, shall also be a member of the HC. Subcommittee membership may include no more than two past Richter Award recipients and would ideally include a mix of mid- to late-career members. No person eligible for the Richter Award may sit on the subcommittee. Normal term of service is three years, with the chair serving for two years.

The Frank Press Public Service Award

Award Criteria

The Frank Press Award honors outstanding contributions to the advancement of public safety or public information relating to seismology and is given no more than once a year.

Award Eligibility

This award may be given to any individual, combination of individuals or to any organization. No individual who is a Director, Director-elect or Officer of the Board of Directors at the time of the nomination deadline shall be eligible for nomination. Similarly, members of the Press Subcommittee are ineligible.

Nomination Procedure

The chief nominator must be an SSA member who is eligible to submit a nomination. The nomination package shall contain a letter of nomination no more than two pages long summarizing the nominee's significant accomplishments and two to four supporting letters, each no more than two pages long. At least one supporting letter shall be written by an SSA member. If an individual is being nominated, a curriculum vitae or biography is recommended but not required. Any unsuccessful nomination may be considered again in the following year's award cycle without resubmission of the nomination package if requested by a nominator before **30 September** of that year. To be reconsidered in subsequent years (beyond the year immediately following the original nomination), a new nomination package must be submitted. The Executive Director will contact nominators via email prior to **30 September** to confirm willingness for reconsideration of a package for a second year.

Awardee Selection

The awardee is selected by the subcommittee, which shall review the nomination packages taking into account the differences in experience and culture of the nominators. The subcommittee shall write a letter to the Board containing: **1)** a list of all nominees, **2)** the proposed recipient, **3)** some text briefly explaining the nominee's characteristics that justify the subcommittee's decision, **4)** optionally, if deemed necessary, some text listing in general terms, without naming names, the reason the proposed recipient was preferable to the other candidates and **5)** a brief description of the selection process. The subcommittee will provide this letter to the HC Chair who will forward the letter and nomination package for the proposed recipient to the Executive Director. The committees, Board and staff will keep the names of nominees and nomination materials private.

The Award

The Press Award recipient receives an inscribed photo-plaque with a photo of Frank Press.

Subcommittee Membership

Five persons, including the chair, serve on the subcommittee. One member of the subcommittee shall also be a member of the HC, preferably the chair. Members need not be SSA members. Subcommittee members shall include junior and senior professionals who are well-informed about public service organizations and the importance of diversity and equity. Normal term of service is three years, with the chair serving for two years.

The Distinguished Service to SSA Award

Award Criteria

This award honors outstanding service to SSA.

Award Eligibility

Any person may be nominated for this award with the exception of any individual who is a Director, Director-elect or Officer of the Board of Directors at the time of the nomination deadline shall be eligible for nomination. There is no restriction on the number of such awards that may be given in any year.

Nomination Procedure

Any SSA member, who is eligible to submit a nomination, may nominate a candidate for this award. One two-page nomination letter must be submitted. Letters of support are optional. Any unsuccessful nomination may be considered again in the following year's award cycle without resubmission of the nomination package if requested by a nominator before **30 September** annual deadline. To be reconsidered in subsequent years (beyond the year immediately following the original nomination) a new nomination package must be submitted. The Executive Director will contact nominators via email prior to **30 September** to confirm willingness for reconsideration of a package for a second year.

Awardee Selection

The Awardee is selected by the Board by a three-fourths vote.

The Award

Awardees become Honorary Members of the Society.

The COSMOS/EERI/SSA Bruce Bolt Medal

Award Criteria

The Bruce Bolt Medal is awarded jointly by the Consortium of Strong Motion Observations Systems (COSMOS), Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) and SSA to recognize individuals worldwide whose accomplishments involve the promotion and use of strong-motion earthquake data and whose leadership in the transfer of scientific and engineering knowledge into practice or policy has led to improved seismic safety.

The following three criteria are used to select the recipient: **1)** promotion of strong-motion instrumentation or advancing strong-motion data processing or data utilization, **2)** technical contributions in seismic engineering or engineering seismology, and **3)** leadership in the transfer of knowledge into practice or policy that has led to improved seismic safety.

Awardee Selection

Nominations will be reviewed in confidence by a six-person Joint Selection Committee formed by two representatives from each of the three sponsoring organizations, COSMOS, EERI and SSA. The committee seeks a nominee worthy of the high level of professional recognition represented by the medal's sponsorship by SSA, COSMOS and EERI. The recommended nominee will be considered in confidence by each organization's Board of Directors which jointly selects the medalist.

Award Eligibility

Current members of the Joint Panel are not eligible for nomination.

Nomination Procedures

COSMOS, EERI and SSA members are encouraged to nominate a colleague or peer for this prestigious honor by the **30 June** deadline. Complete nomination packages shall be submitted using this form:

<https://forms.gle/Ph84qVXsM86cDkUe9>.

A complete nomination package must include the following:

- A nomination letter, written and submitted by the chief nominator. It shall be no longer than two pages and must address the ways in which the candidate meets all three of the selection criteria.
- A Curriculum Vitae for the nominee or a substantial summary of the professional history of the candidate, including employment, significant publications, honors, activities and accomplishments relevant to the Bolt Medal criteria.
- The current contact information for the candidate.
- The nomination must be endorsed by three additional individuals, either by adding their signature to the nominating letter or by providing an additional letter of support (no more than two pages in length). Such individual letters shall include a personal perspective on the nominee and their sustained impact on the field.

The Award

The award is issued annually and is presented to the recipient at the annual meeting of the recipient's choice among the three sponsoring organizations.

Questions?

Any questions regarding the Bruce Bolt Medal shall be sent to boltmedal@eeri.org.

The William B. Joyner Memorial Lecturer

The William B. Joyner Memorial Lecture Series was established by SSA in cooperation with the EERI to honor William B. Joyner's distinguished career at the U.S. Geological Survey and his enduring commitment to the exchange of information at the interface of earthquake science and earthquake engineering. Joyner Lecturers are chosen on the basis of their work at this interface, whether it involves contributions from earthquake science to earthquake engineering, or from earthquake engineering to earthquake science.

Nomination packages must include:

- A nomination letter of no more than two pages. The letter must clearly document the nominee's accomplishments that foster and enhance the earthquake-science/earthquake engineering interface and explain why these accomplishments have made a positive impact on the state of knowledge and practice in earthquake engineering and seismology.
 - This letter must be endorsed by three additional persons, either by adding their signature to the nominating letter or by providing additional individual letters of support (also no more than two pages each, and no more than three letters in total). These additional persons or signatories do not need to be SSA or EERI members.
- Either a Curriculum Vitae for the nominee or a substantial summary of the professional history of the candidate. This may include honors, awards, professional affiliations, lectures and publications, and professional service and experience that address the intent of the Joyner Lecture Award.
- Additionally, the chief nominator must complete and submit the **online ethics disclosure form**. The nomination is not considered final/received until the form is completed.

The annual deadline for nominations is **30 June**. Nominations can be considered for a period of up to two years (i.e., nominees not selected in the year of submission can be considered in the next year without resubmission of the nomination materials).

The Joyner Lecturer Selection Committee Responsibilities and Composition

- Reviewing the submitted nominations and selecting one candidate to recommend for the annual Joyner Lectureship
- Recommending a committee chair for the next award cycle
- The committee will consist of six voting members and shall be designed and appointments made with the goal of achieving balanced representation in terms of both technical diversity (between seismology and earthquake engineering) and demographic diversity (career stage, gender, country of residence, etc.) At least two members, but no more than three, shall be previous Joyner Lecturers. The SSA and EERI will each appoint three members to the committee, and no member of the SSA or EERI Board of Directors may serve on the committee. Committee members will serve for a three-year term, with each organization appointing new members as the terms expire. All committee members are required to complete an ethics disclosure form.

The executive directors of each organization shall be responsible for reviewing all recommended organizational appointments prior to inviting new members in an effort to ensure balance.

Chair Appointment and Terms

The committee will select the chair from within the committee for a one-year term, which is then subject to the approval of both Boards of Directors. Preferably, the chair will have served on the committee for at least one year prior to being selected. Chairs shall be rotated. No individual shall serve more than two consecutive years as chair.

Selection Criteria for Lecturer

In the spirit of William B. Joyner's commitment to the exchange of information at the interface of earthquake science and earthquake engineering, the chosen recipient must meet all of the below criteria:

- Membership with SSA or EERI
- A demonstrated professional commitment to the exchange of information at the interface of earthquake science and earthquake engineering
- A demonstrated professional history of strengthening the interface of earthquake science and earthquake engineering, by either making significant contributions from earthquake science to earthquake engineering or significant contributions from earthquake engineering to earthquake science

Current members of the Joyner Lecture Selection Committee are not eligible for nomination or selection. Similarly, no current or elected Board member or officer at either EERI or SSA is eligible.

Selection Endorsement

The recipient of the award must be approved by the Board of Directors of each organization.

SSA Honors Guide Terms

The terms of reference of the Honors Program shall be reviewed at least once every five years.

Questions about SSA's Awards Program shall be directed to awards@seismosoc.org.