

Duties of Prize Committee Members and Chairs

Prize Committees are critical to the AAS prize process. The committee members read all the completed nominations for the current year and the previous two years. For most prizes, this typically means reviewing 5-20 nominations. For AAS Fellows, there will be ~20 nominations per year, so the committee will review ~60 nominations, including those from the previous two years. For the Chambliss Astronomical Writing Prize, committees will review all the nominated textbooks — typically, there are two to three books per cycle, meaning the committee will review six to nine books per year.

Terms for all the prize committees are three years and are renewable. The review period begins in mid-July and ends at the end of October. If the person selected for a prize decides not to accept it, the committee will need to select another prize awardee.

All committee deliberations and the final winner for each prize will be held in confidence (i.e., embargoed) until the AAS makes the public announcement of each year's winners.

The following are expected of all prize committee members:

1. Attend a training session at the beginning of the term to learn the specifics of the review and selection process and how to use the online prize system (OpenWater).
2. As a reviewer, respond quickly to emails from the committee chair and the AAS Secretary to create an online account, access nominations, and learn how the review and selection processes will be conducted, including committee meeting dates, use of rubrics for rating nominations, schedule for discussions, and final selection process.
3. As chair, review all nominations and ensure candidates meet the basic requirements for the prize. Communicate with the committee to set up a schedule for reviews, discussion, and selection. Communicate with the AAS Secretary regarding any issues or questions that may arise. Ensure that the selection process is completed by the end of the review period (usually the end of October).
4. The chair is expected to write a citation (for a single awardee), with the committee's input, if appropriate. For the AAS Fellows, the full committee may be needed to complete all the citations.
5. If problems arise, with the nominees or committee members, inform the AAS Secretary as soon as these are known. Please do not wait until the last couple of weeks before the selections are due — the deadline for selections is difficult to extend due to the timing requirement for the announcement of awardees.