

The Royal Society Medals and Awards: Nomination guidance

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Overview

The Royal Society has a broad range of awards that celebrate and recognise excellence in science. Our awards celebrate excellence at every career stage – from emerging leaders to internationally renowned researchers and reflect the contributions of scientists working across the UK, Republic of Ireland and around the world. We seek to highlight those whose work is advancing knowledge, driving discovery and shaping the future of science.

This document provides guidance and support on the timeline, eligibility criteria and nomination process for the awards, including step by step guidance on using the nomination system.

Timeline

Date	Activity
1 December 2025	Call for Nominations opens
20 February 2026	Call for Nominations closes
26 February - May 2026	Royal Society contacts suggested referees where required. Premier Awards, Physical and Biological Committees shortlist nominations and seek independent referees.
April - June 2026	All committees score the nominations
July 2026	Council reviews and approves winners recommended by award committees
August 2026	Winners announced

The Nomination process

Call for nominations

- Nominations open on the Royal Society's Anniversary Day – **1 December 2025**.
- Nominations close on **20 February 2026, 23:59 GMT**

Review process

- Once the call for nominations has closed, committees are invited to review and score each nomination within their remit.
- Following the collection of references, nominations are shortlisted, and most awards are scored for a second time. Awards with only 1 scoring round are the Milner Award, Hauksbee Award, David Attenborough Award, Wilkins-Bernal-Medawar Medal, Athena Prize and Rosalind Franklin Award.
- These scores are confidential and will be discussed by the relevant awarding committee at their respective selection meeting held in the spring.

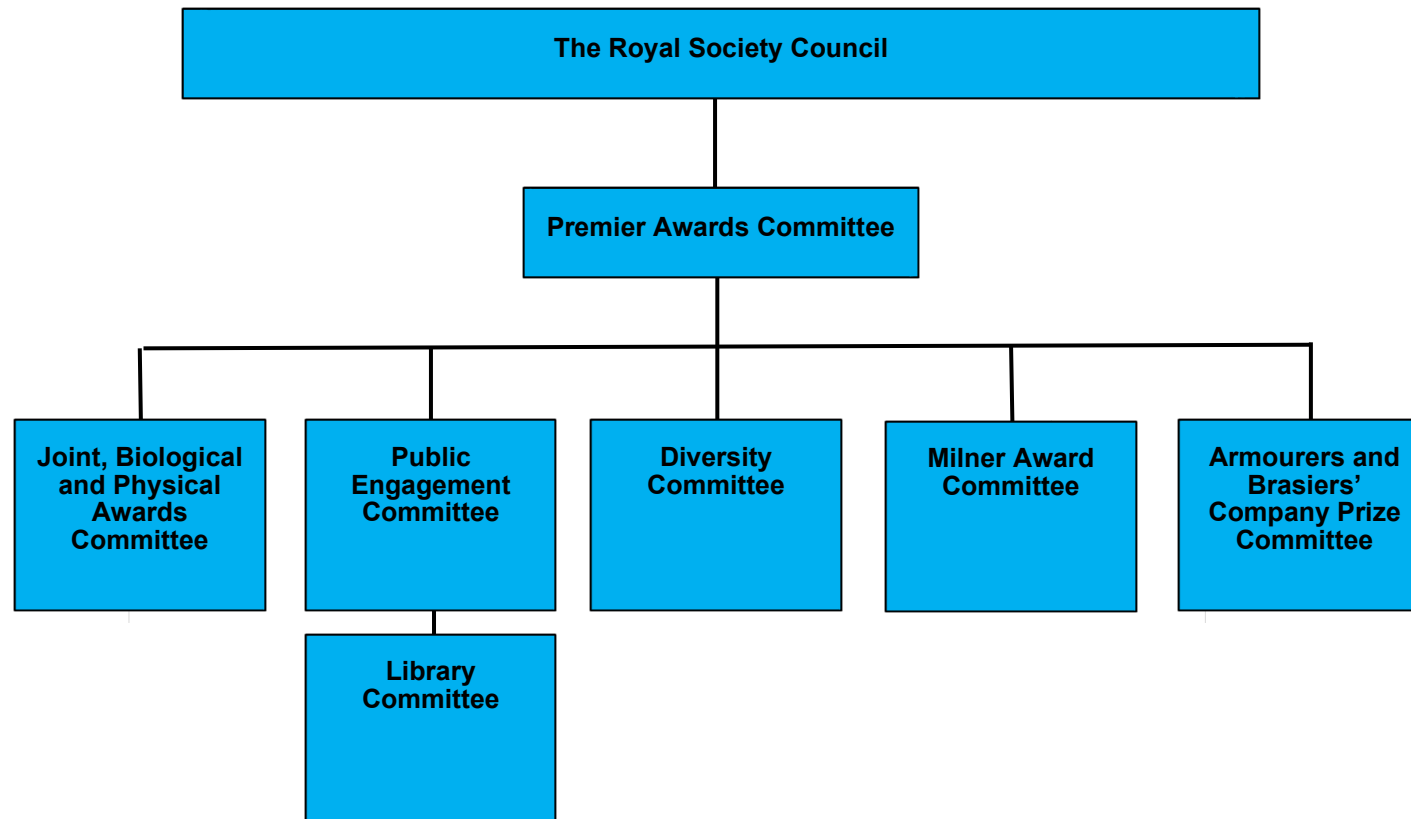
Approval of awards

- Following the selection meetings, recommendations for the winners of the non-premier awards are made to the Premier Awards Committee for approval. More information about the awards committees for individual medals can be found in the table on pages 5-9. The flowchart below shows the committee decision-making process.
- Final approval is given by the [Royal Society Council](#) at their July meeting.
- The Royal Medal winners are subject to His Majesty's approval, which is normally received by the end of July.

Notification of outcome

- Successful winners and nominators will be informed by email in July, in advance of the public announcement of winners in late August.
- The Royal Medal winners and nominators will be informed in July, following His Majesty's approval.

The Royal Society Medals and Awards Committees' Governance Structure



Eligibility

Criteria for nominees and nominators

- Nominees and nominators cannot be members of the [Royal Society Council](#), [Premier Awards Committee](#), or selection Committees overseeing the medal in question. More information about the selection committees for individual medals can be found in the eligibility table on the next few pages.
- If the award is externally funded, nominees cannot be employed by the organisation funding the medal.

Self-nominations

- Self-nominations are not accepted for all medals except the Athena Prize.
- The Africa Prize and Rosalind Franklin Medal and Lecture, each require input from the nominee.

Nominations cycle

- Nominations are valid for three cycles of the award for all medals except the Athena Prize. Unsuccessful nominations will automatically roll over to the next award cycle unless the nominee's circumstances have changed so as to make them ineligible. Nominators are given the opportunity to update previously submitted nominations during the nomination window each year and we encourage them to do so.

Subject specific medals

- No person should be awarded a subject-specific medal if they have already received a Royal Society Premier Award (Copley Medal, Royal Medals, Bakerian Medal and Lecture or Croonian Medal and Lecture).
- Winners of subject-specific medals are not eligible for another subject-specific award unless the nomination is for an entirely new body of work.
- Winners of Royal Society Premier Awards are not eligible for other Premier Awards unless the work is substantially different from the case made for the original award, except for the Copley Medal.
- Winners of subject-specific awards are eligible for Premier Awards whether or not the body of work is substantially the same as that for the subject-specific award.

Please check the award criteria below before nominating someone for an award. A link to any further guidance and criteria is included where applicable. The full list of medals open for nomination this year can be found on **pages 5-9**.

Eligibility Table: The following awards are open this year

	Stated purpose	Eligibility	Gift	Career stage (if stated)	Nomination validity	Group eligibility	Selection Committee
Premier awards							
Copley Medal (Biological Sciences) <i>[Biennial]</i>	For sustained, outstanding achievements in any field of science (alternates physical and biological science each year).	International	£25,000	Senior	3 award cycles	Yes	Premier Awards Committee
Croonian Medal and Lecture	Premier lecture in biological sciences - for sustained, outstanding achievements in biological sciences.	International	£10,000	Senior	3 award cycles	Yes	Premier Awards Committee
Bakerian Medal and Lecture	Premier lecture in physical sciences - for sustained, outstanding achievements in physical sciences.	International	£10,000	Senior	3 award cycles	Yes	Premier Awards Committee
Royal Medal – physical sciences	For outstanding achievements in physical sciences.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£10,000	Senior	3 award cycles	Yes	Premier Awards Committee
Royal Medal – biological sciences	For outstanding achievements in biological sciences.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£10,000	Senior	3 award cycles	Yes	Premier Awards Committee
Royal Medal – applied sciences	For outstanding achievements in applied sciences.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£10,000	Senior	3 award cycles	Yes	Premier Awards Committee
Physical sciences medals							
Davy Medal	For outstanding contributions in the field of chemistry.	UK/Commonwealth/Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	Physical Sciences Awards Committee
Hughes Medal	For outstanding contributions in the field of energy.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	Physical Sciences Awards Committee

Royal Society Milner Award	To recognise an outstanding European computer scientist, someone who has made a substantial contribution and who is likely go on to further top-level achievement.	European ¹ citizen or resident for at least 12 months. Nominees cannot be employed by Microsoft and its subsidiaries.	£5,000		3 award cycles	No	Milner Award Committee
Rumford Medal	For outstanding contributions in the field of physics.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	Physical Sciences Awards Committee
Sylvester Medal	For outstanding contributions in the field of mathematics.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	Physical Sciences Awards Committee
Biological sciences medals							
Buchanan Medal	For distinguished contributions to the biomedical sciences.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	Biological Sciences Awards Committee
Darwin Medal	For work of distinction in evolution, biological diversity and developmental, population and organismal biology.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	Biological Sciences Awards Committee
Ferrier Medal and Lecture [Biennial]	On a subject related to the advancement of natural knowledge on the structure and function of the nervous system.	UK/Commonwealth/Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	Biological Sciences Awards Committee

¹ “European” to include Council of Europe members and other countries within the landmass of Europe.’

Francis Crick Medal and Lecture	On any field in the biological sciences. Preference is given to genetics, molecular biology and neurobiology, the general areas in which Francis Crick worked, and to fundamental theoretical work, which was the hallmark of Crick's science.	UK/Commonwealth/Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000	Early career, <15 years post PhD	3 award cycles	Yes	Biological Sciences Awards Committee
Interdisciplinary medals and those celebrating the communication and promotion of science							
Royal Society Africa Prize Additional guidance	To recognise research scientists based in Africa who are making an innovative contribution to the sciences, which contributes significantly to capacity building the Africa.	African citizen, based in Africa	£17,000 (£15,000 research grant and personal gift of £2,000)	Senior researcher, >15 years post PhD	3 award cycles	No	The Joint Awards committee, comprising both Biological and Physical Awards Committees
Royal Society Armourers and Brasiers' Company Prize <i>[Biennial]</i>	For excellence in basic research in functional or structural materials where the research is clearly motivated by use of these materials.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000	Mid-career to senior scientists, >10 years post PhD	3 award cycles	No	Armourers and Brasiers' Company Prize Committee
Royal Society Athena Prize <i>[Biennial]</i>	For individuals or teams working in UK academic and research communities, who have contributed most to the advancement of diversity in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) within their communities.	UK citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£5,000		1 award cycle	Yes	Diversity and Inclusion Committee
Royal Society David Attenborough Prize and Lecture	Awarded to an individual for outstanding and sustained public engagement with science.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,500		3 award cycles	Yes	Public Engagement Committee

Additional guidance							
Gabor Medal	For distinction of interdisciplinary work between the life sciences with other disciplines.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	The Joint Awards committee, comprising both Biological and Physical Awards Committees
Michael Faraday Prize and Lecture Additional guidance	To the scientist or engineer whose expertise in communicating scientific ideas in lay terms is exemplary.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,500		3 award cycles	Yes	Public Engagement Committee
Rosalind Franklin Award and Lecture Additional guidance	To support the promotion of women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.	UK citizens or residents for 3 or more years.	£40,000 project grant and £1,000 personal prize.	Early career, <20 years post PhD	3 award cycles	No	Diversity and Inclusion Committee
Royal Society Mullard Award	To individuals or teams whose work has the potential to contribute to national prosperity.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000 gift and £1,500 travel grant		3 award cycles	Yes	The Joint Awards committee, comprising both Biological and Physical Awards Committees
Wilkins-Bernal-Medawar Medal and Lecture Additional guidance	Given on a subject relating to the history of science, philosophy of science or the social function of science.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	Library Committee

Royal Society Hauxsbee Award	For outstanding achievements in science by those whose work is mostly 'behind the scenes' or in support, such as technicians, research office staff or other contributors who might not normally be recognised.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	The Joint Awards committee, comprising both Biological and Physical Awards Committees
Royal Society Research Culture Award	For outstanding contributions to the wider research community.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	The Joint Awards committee, comprising both Biological and Physical Awards Committees
Royal Society Environment Medal	For outstanding and sustained work in environmental science.	UK/Commonwealth/ Republic of Ireland citizens or residents for 3 or more years	£2,000		3 award cycles	Yes	The Joint Awards committee, comprising both Biological and Physical Awards Committees

Guidance for Nominators

Below are some guidelines for consideration when preparing your nomination and supporting statement.

Who can nominate?

- There are no eligibility restrictions for nominators, and you do not need to be a Fellow of the Royal Society to nominate or to be nominated for an award.
- Nominators cannot be members of the [Royal Society Council](#), [Premier Awards Committee](#), or selection Committees overseeing the medal in question. More information about the selection committees for individual medals can be found in the eligibility table.

Before you begin

- Please take time to read the eligibility criteria for the awards on **pages 5-9** to ensure that the nominee you are putting forward meets the requirements.
- Nomination questions are the same for most awards except for the Africa Prize, Athena Prize, Milner Lecture and Rosalind Franklin Medal and Lecture, which also contain subject specific questions. We recommend that you preview the [Nominator questions](#) before you start so that you can gather any information you might need.

What makes a good nomination?

- The Royal Society is keen to receive nominations for the very best candidates that represent the full diversity of the scientific community, from a broad range of academic institutions, career stages and industries, as well as international nominations (where eligible).
- Awards that come with a prize lecture are awarded to outstanding scientists who are also exceptional communicators. A good nomination for this type of award should provide evidence that the nominee is an engaging and experienced communicator.
- When making your nomination, it is important that you know the work of the nominee well enough to build a strong case for why they deserve the award. Committees are looking for a compelling account of the importance and impact of the nominee's work, their outstanding achievements, and contributions to science.
- A good nomination should describe as well as possible the difference the nominee's contribution has made. Consider what distinguishes your nominee from others doing similar work and provide details to support these claims.
- Please note that your nomination will be judged by the relevant awarding Committees, whose expertise covers a range of sciences. Please bear in mind that you are writing for people outside your field when completing your nomination.

Please note:

1. The Africa Prize and Rosalind Franklin Medal and Lecture both require input from the nominee.
2. The Athena Prize is a self-nominated award.

How to make a nomination

1. All nominations must be submitted using **the Royal Society Awards system**. Below you will find images of the application screens as you will see them. This is to assist you with gathering and ordering your nomination in the format it will be required. You can save the progress of your nomination and return to it at any time up until the deadline for submission. **Please note that you cannot edit your nomination once it has been submitted.**

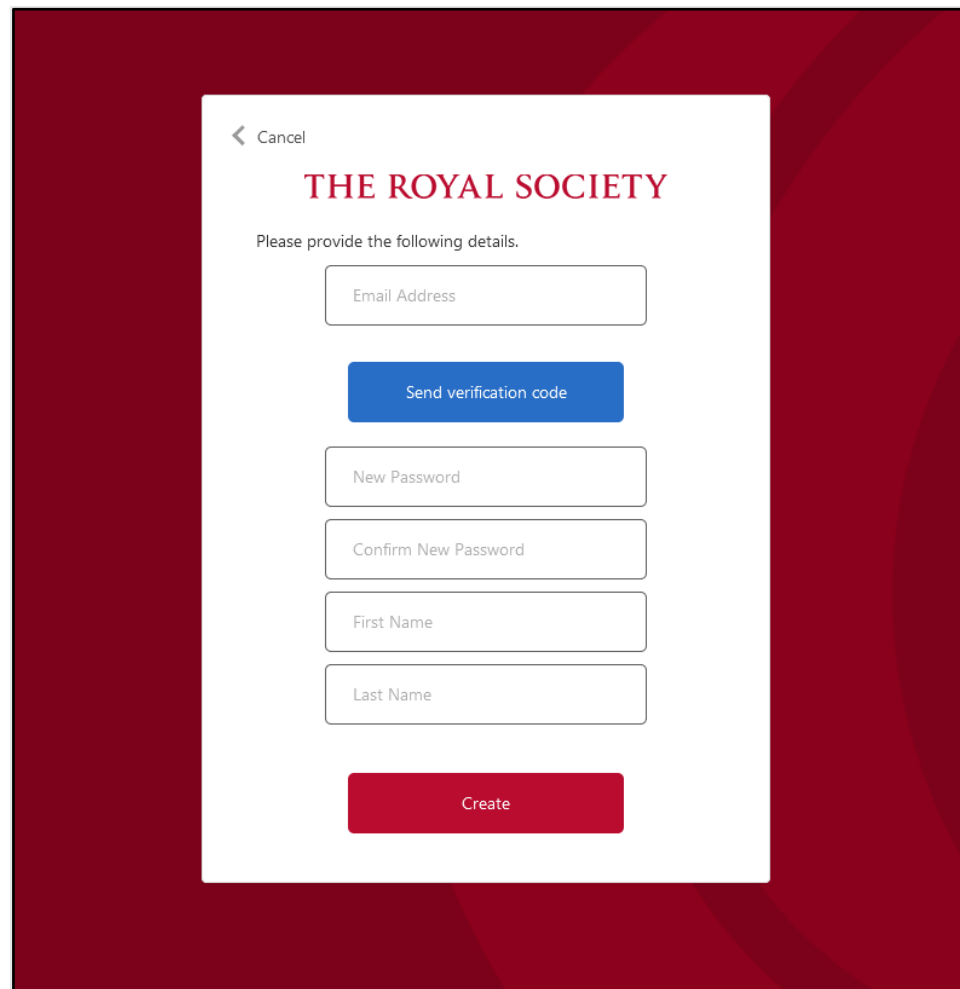
Please note:

The Africa Prize, Athena Prize, Milner Lecture and Rosalind Franklin Medal and Lecture have subject specific questions not outlined in the screenshots below. The questions can be found in the individual guidance documents linked above in [the eligibility table](#).

Starting a nomination

Visit: [Medals and Awards: Your nomination dashboard · The Royal Society](#)

2. Register for an account. Please input your email, click send verification code, wait a few minutes for the code to arrive and then continue with the rest of the registration details. For the best user experience, we recommend using Microsoft Edge, Chrome or Safari browsers.

A registration form for The Royal Society is displayed on a dark red background. The form is a white card with a red back arrow and 'Cancel' text at the top left. The title 'THE ROYAL SOCIETY' is in red. Below it, the text 'Please provide the following details.' is in black. The form contains several input fields: 'Email Address', 'New Password', 'Confirm New Password', 'First Name', and 'Last Name'. A blue button labeled 'Send verification code' is positioned between the email and password fields. A red button labeled 'Create' is at the bottom of the form.

< Cancel

THE ROYAL SOCIETY

Please provide the following details.

Email Address

Send verification code

New Password

Confirm New Password

First Name

Last Name

Create

3. Click on 'create nomination' and then select the award you wish to submit a nomination for, from the dropdown list.

Make a nomination

Please select the award you are nominating for from the dropdown list below. Please also note the following information:

- For the purposes of this process, the person making the nomination is known as the 'nominator'
- Before you begin, we recommend that you consult the nomination guide for details on how to complete the nomination form and to ensure that the relevant eligibility criteria for your chosen award has been met

The nomination guide can be found on the Royal Society [website](#). If you have any questions or queries, please contact awards@royalsociety.org

1. Award selection/eligibility

2. Nominator details

3. Nominee details

4. Nomination details

5. Referees

Medal/Award

Africa Prize

Bakerian Medal and Lecture

Buchanan Medal

Clifford Paterson Medal and Lecture

Copley Medal (physical sciences)

Croonian Medal and Lecture

Darwin Medal

David Attenborough Prize and Lecture

Davy Medal

Francis Crick Medal and Lecture

Gabor Medal

Hauksbee Award

Hughes Medal

Leeuwenhoek Medal and Lecture

Michael Faraday Prize and Lecture

Milner Award and Lecture

Mullard Award

Rosalind Franklin Award and Lecture

Royal Medal (applied sciences)

Royal Medal (biological sciences)

Royal Medal (physical sciences)



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4. Check the eligibility of the nominee. This varies by award, and full details can be found in the eligibility table on **pages 5-9** of this document.

Step 1 – Eligibility

[Read more about Example Award](#)

Nomination: Example Award

1. Award selection/eligibility

2. Nominator details

3. Nominee details

4. Nomination details

Has the Nominee been a UK/Commonwealth/Republic of Ireland resident for 3 or more years? *

☒ Yes ☐ No

Save & continue

5. Input **your details as nominator** (person making the nomination). Here you will also have the option to preview the upcoming questions, by clicking the '**Preview questions**' button. Please do make sure to complete all required fields in order to move onto the next question.

Step 2 - Nominator details

Please enter your contact details below.

Nomination: Example Award

Preview questions

1. Award selection/eligibility

2. Nominator details

3. Nominee details

4. Nomination details

5. Referees

What is your relationship to the nominee?

Title

Honours

Preferred telephone number

Please include country code if outside the UK

Current organisation

Current position

6. **Nominee contact details:** If you are nominating an individual or a team of 3 or less, please enter the details of each individual in the form. If nominating a larger team, then enter the details of a lead contact person into the 'Nominee 1' section and enter a team name in the provided field.

Step 3 - Nominee details

Nomination: Example Award

1. Award selection/eligibility

2. Nominator details

3. Nominee details

4. Nomination details

5. Referees

Team Name

Nominee 1

First name *

Last name *

Email address *

Job title *

Institution *

7. Please answer **all** questions in this section.

1. Award selection/eligibility

2. Nominator details

3. Nominee details

4. Nomination details

Why should the candidate be considered for this medal? *

List the Nominee's key achievements *

Word Count (0 of 1000)

Provide a brief summary of the Nominee's career history *

Word Count (0 of 500)

Please provide information on any other relevant achievements or awards held by the Nominee *

Word Count (0 of 500)

Statement of support *

Word Count (0 of 500)

8. Once the 'Nomination details' section is complete, click '**save and continue**'. You will then see the message below. Ensure that you click on '**Return to nomination list**'.
9. You can now go back in and edit your nomination if you wish. If you have no further edits, you can submit your nomination by clicking '**Submit**' under the '**Actions**' heading.
10. **Please note, you cannot edit your nomination once it has been submitted.**

Nomination form complete

You have reached the last step of the nomination process. You can edit this nomination until you are ready to submit it.

Return to [Nomination List](#).

Once you press submit on the nomination list dashboard, you will receive a confirmation email shortly after.

You can also download a pdf of the nomination for your records here.

Medals and Awards: Your nomination dashboard			
Create nomination			
Award/Medal	Nominee	Status	Actions
Example Award	peir, *	Draft	Edit Submit Delete Download

Privacy Policy

When you complete a nomination for a Royal Society award, as a nominator you submit your information and usually that of the nominee in an application form. Any personal data that you provide is used for the purpose of reviewing the nomination. Some of the information you submit may be published on the Royal Society website and social media channels, if the nominated individual is selected to receive the award. You should seek permission from the nominee before submitting their details to us.

Please see [Privacy Policy](#)

Enquiries

For any further enquiries about nominations or any other matters related to the Royal Society's awards programme, please contact the Medals and Awards Team based at The Royal Society, 6-9 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5AG, by email to awards@royalsociety.org or by telephone on 020 7451 2543.