

## Ethical Guidelines for Nominated Awards and Invited Speakers/Panelists

### **BSA Awards Background:**

To recognize scientists and students for significant contributions to the field of Botany, including the public's understanding of botanical science, the Botanical Society of America (BSA) sponsors a wide range of awards and prizes.

The BSA is committed to equal opportunity for all persons, without regard to race, color, religion, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, genetic information, protected EEO activities or other protected categories. BSA seeks as diverse a pool of award nominations as possible, including a wide range of disciplines, institutional types, and geographical locations.

All award winners are expected to meet the commonly held [BSA Guidelines for Professional Ethics](#). The **Professional Conduct Disclosure Form** will be required from all nominators, including the lead nominator and all letter writers.

### **Important Considerations for Award Committee Members:**

#### **(1) Conflicts of Interest**

Committee members are not eligible to vote on a nominee if there is a conflict of interest where the committee member is or has been in a position of trust (such as employment, officer, consultant, contractor) with the nominee such as:

- Currently (or recently) being a member of the same institution as the nominee
- Being a current or recent collaborator (past six years)
- Being or having been a dissertation supervisor or student of the nominee
- Having close familial ties or a personal relationship with the nominee
- Other conflicts as determined by the Board of Directors

#### **(2) Considerations for Reviewing Award Packets**

Letters of support should be arm's-length, and it is advisable to have one from researchers in the same country, from a different country, and/or from junior scientists at the home institution who are not supervised by or in a power relationship with that researcher. Both measures may help detect possible issues with professional misconduct (e.g. plagiarism, fabrication of data) and inappropriate behavior, (e.g. bullying and harassment). Awards committees should decide how many letters are required and if any specific types of letters should be included in the award's description.

- Could this nomination benefit from including a letter of support from a student or early career letter of support from someone at the home institution?
- Could this nomination benefit from a letter of support from someone outside their institution but in the same country?

- Is the awardee lacking a nomination from someone at their current institution?

Lead nominators and each letter writer should complete the Professional Conduct Disclosure Form. Award Committees reserve the right to solicit the Professional Conduct Disclosure Form and additional information from another person not included as an initial nominator or letter writer. Awards Committees must complete any follow-up with those who complete the form if any issues are raised. As a practice, we will not retain the names nor circumstances of anyone who is removed from consideration for the Award through our process.

### **(3) Bias Training**

Award committee members should confirm that they have taken bias training within the past 2 years (e.g. for a search committee or awards committee). If you have not, (or want to brush up on these principles), then we recommend the following:

<https://equity.ucla.edu/know/implicit-bias/>

<https://www.projectimplicit.net/services/education/>

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

<https://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/program-programme/equity-equite/bias/module-eng.aspx?pedisable=false>

Viewing one or more of these videos/training sites will help our awards committees to ensure evaluation of the nominations is done more fairly.

### **(4) Invited speakers and panelists to BSA sponsored events**

- The Professional Conduct Disclosure form also applies to BSA sponsored events including Student Rep events, Botany360, Conference invited speakers
- To ensure that the speakers we invite adhere to our professional ethics guidelines, prior to nomination, the event organizer seeks out one person who can complete the Professional Conduct Disclosure Form on behalf of the invited speaker

**Botanical Society of America Professional Conduct Disclosure Form**

**Completed by (your name)** \_\_\_\_\_

**In reference to (nominee's name)** \_\_\_\_\_

*(Please answer Yes, No, or Abstain to each statement)*

To the best of my knowledge,

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I attest that the nominee has strong scientific integrity.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I attest that the nominee treats students, mentees, staff, and colleagues with professional behavior, both within and outside the discipline of Botany.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I attest the nominee does not practice nor allow discrimination or harassment in any form, and when they perceive it in the action of others, they take appropriate corrective steps.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I attest the nominee has not been the subject of a filed allegation, complaint, investigation, sanction or other legal, civil or institutional proceeding, where there was a finding of misconduct, nor are they currently the subject of such an allegation, complaint, or investigation in which their professional conduct is at issue.

By completing this form I consent to being contacted for follow up questions.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred contact information (phone or email): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I request to be contacted soon by a member of the search committee to further discuss any of my answers or any concerns about the nominee.

**For self-disclosures only**

I affirm that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by the Botanical Society of America Guidelines for Professional Ethics <https://botany.org/home/governance/guidelines-for-professional-ethics.html>. By signing this document, I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the above response and all information provided by me related to this Professional Conduct Disclosure Form are truthful, accurate, and complete, and I agree to notify BSA promptly of any material changes required in my responses to the above question. I acknowledge that failure to comply with BSA's policies may result in my ineligibility to receive, or revocation of, any BSA award, honor, other type of BSA recognition, or governance position, and is grounds for potential sanctions against me.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

