Guidelines for Nominating and Recommending Candidates for Associate Fellow

Society for Technical Communication
9401 Lee Highway, Suite 300
Fairfax, VA 22031
(703) 522-4114
stc@stc.org
www.stc.org
Contents

Definition of Associate Fellow 3
Qualifications for Rank of Associate Fellow 3
Nominating Candidates for Associate Fellow 4
Committee Evaluation 5
Additional Information 5
Committee Procedures 6
Exhibit 1: Reference Request Template 9
Exhibit 2: Evaluation Form Template 10
Guidelines for Recommending Candidates for Associate Fellow

These guidelines describe the process used by the STC Associate Fellows Committee to review and recommend to the Board of Directors candidates for STC Associate Fellow.

The STC President, subject to Board approval, appoints the Associate Fellows Chair and committee. The committee comprises at least three STC members in good standing with the rank of Associate Fellow or Fellow. The committee chair is a Fellow.

Definition of Associate Fellow

An Associate Fellow is a STC Member who has been formally recognized by the Society for having attained distinction in the field of technical communication and within the Society for Technical Communication. Associate Fellow is one of the three elective, honorary ranks in the Society. Associate Fellow, after Fellow, is the second highest rank that the Society can confer upon a member. To attain the rank of Associate Fellow, a recommended candidate must receive a two-thirds affirmative vote of all members of the Board of Directors. By voting affirmatively, the board members agree that the candidate, deserves this honor by virtue of outstanding achievements in and contributions to the arts and science of technical communication.

The rank of Associate Fellow is conferred on an individual only once. That individual is then recognized at the STC Summit following his or her election to that rank.

Associate Fellows retain the honorary rank of Associate Fellow for life. If they are elevated to the rank of Fellow, they rescind their title of Associate Fellow.

Qualifications for Rank of Associate Fellow

The rank of Associate Fellow is conferred upon Members who have attained distinction in the field of technical communication and within the Society for Technical Communication.

To be considered for election as an Associate Fellow, a candidate must have been active in technical communication for at least 15 years and have fulfilled ten years of service as an STC Member, as of the application submission deadline.
Some level of the applicant’s work must be ongoing to the time of the application, with some key contributions taking place no more than five years prior to the application date.

The candidate must have made significant accomplishments in one or more of the following:

- Been responsible for important work in the field of technical communication
- Done notable original work that has contributed to the advancement of technical communication
- Made a significant contribution to the Society and helped to tell STC’s powerful story

The Nomination for Associate Fellow form provides a detailed explanation and guidelines for providing the required information.

In addition, the Member must remain a member in good standing from the time of the nomination through the award presentation at the STC Summit the following year. If a recommended candidate allows his or her membership to lapse during this time, he or she will not receive the honor.

To continue to keep this rank a sought-after, but not easily attained honor, membership in this rank shall not exceed 5% of total STC membership.

**Nominating Candidates for Associate Fellow**

Any member of STC may submit a candidate’s nomination to the Associate Fellows Committee. In addition, a Member may self-nominate. Self-nominations, however, must be endorsed by two Senior Members (STC Members who have had at least five years of consecutive membership) in good standing, one of whom must be either a current or former Society or community leader or a current STC Fellow or Associate Fellow. Endorsers cannot be used as references.

For reasons of propriety and potential conflicts of interest, members of the STC Staff, the STC Board of Directors, or the Associate Fellows Committee may not submit a nomination for Associate Fellow on behalf of themselves or on behalf of a Member. Furthermore, members of the Board, the Associate Fellows Committee, or the STC Office Staff are ineligible to serve as references or endorsers for candidates for Associate Fellow.

Although members of the Associate Fellows Committee have an obligation to vet each application, that obligation in no way reduces the importance of the submitter filing a complete application with all adequate information and online references to support the nomination. If an application is incomplete or shows a lack of care on the part of the submitter, the chair of the Associate Fellows Committee contacts the
submitter and either requests a complete application or refuses the applicant for that program year. An incomplete application does not change the required due dates for the application.

Committee Evaluation

During evaluation, the committee considers the work shown as it applies to the following areas:

- Important work in the field of technical communication
- Notable, original work that has contributed to the advancement of technical communication
- Significant contribution(s) to the Society such as helping to tell STC’s powerful story

The categories of activities in the Nomination for Associate Fellow application form and from which the committee assesses each candidate are as follows:

- Contributions to the Advancement of Technical Communication
- Professional Experience
- Publications, Papers, Presentations, and Electronic Materials
- Service to local, regional, or Society-level STCHonors and Awards
- Educational Background
- Affiliations With and Contributions to Other Organizations

Additional Information

The committee reviews each application, does random checks to verify claims noted in the application, performs a general online search into the candidate’s e-presence, and contacts the identified references. If an application appears not to correspond to the person being submitted for an honor, either over- or under-stating accomplishments, the committee member will contact the committee chair. The committee chair will make inquiries and do research to make a final decision as to the inclusion of that application for that program year’s recommended candidates. Any such decisions will be recorded and presented to the Board of Directors.

Based on evaluation of the information collected, the committee forwards to the STC Board of Directors a list of all recommended candidates and a summarized decision on whether the committee accepts or rejects each nomination.

The STC Board of Directors then reviews the summaries for each recommendation and votes to accept or deny the candidates as presented
from the committee. Copies of the original applications are kept at the STC Office and can be viewed by the Board of Directors upon request.

In addition, the Associate Fellows Committee requires references from three individuals who are familiar with the candidate’s accomplishments. References should be people with whom the candidate has been involved in an ongoing way during his or her professional career; they need not be members of STC. No current members of the STC Board of Directors, of the Associate Fellows Committee, or of the STC Staff may serve as applicant reference or as endorser for those applicants who self-nominate. Likewise, members who prepare or endorse the Associate Fellow application may not serve as one of the references for that application.

Committee Procedures

The basic procedures the Associate Fellows (AF) Committee follows to develop the list of recommended candidates to the STC Board of Directors for acceptance into the ranks of Associate Fellow are these:

- The committee chair works with the STC President to establish a list of committee members to be presented to the Board for approval.

- The committee chair (with help from the STC Office Staff and AF committee) prepares publicity materials that advertise the deadline and procedures for submitting nominations for Associate Fellows (for example, information on the STC web site, articles for Intercom, and other social media, and an e-mail message to all community leaders) and submits them to the STC Office for distribution.

- The committee chair works with the committee to determine the committee’s schedule for the year and distributes it to appropriate parties.

- The committee reviews and revises, as needed, the Nomination for Associate Fellow application form and forwards it to the STC Office for posting on the web site.

- The committee reviews and revises, as needed, the committee guidelines and forwards them to the Board of Directors for approval and posting on the web site.

- STC members complete and submit Nominations for Associate Fellow to the STC Office with a copy to the chair of the Associate Fellows Committee by the posted deadline for that year. Members must submit a current application with three references each time they submit an application for Associate Fellow. Within 2 business days, the committee chair confirms receipt of Associate Fellow nominations.
• The STC Office verifies that recommended candidates have been STC Members for at least ten years and notifies the chair of the committee.

• The STC Office handles all details regarding the payment of the application fee; payment of the fee does not affect the schedule of the Associate Fellows Committee.

• The committee chair coordinates the evaluation and deliberation process and timing with the other committee members. The chair sends appropriate work forms to committee members.

• The committee chair distributes the application packages amongst the committee members, working to avoid any perceived conflicts of interest.

• The committee requests information from each candidate’s references, does an online review of a sample of noted websites, follows up as necessary, prepares a summarized overview of findings, and shares the results among the committee members through conference calls and e-mail. Exhibit 1 provides a template for the reference request sent by e-mail to each reference.

• Each committee member evaluates his or her assigned candidates using information provided in the applicant’s packages, information provided by the candidate references, information attained during online research, and any other information that is cited in the candidate packages or by the candidate references.

• The committee members evaluate each application with respect to the categories described in the Nomination Criteria section of these guidelines and send their evaluations to the committee chair. Exhibit 2 provides a template for the evaluation form used by committee members during their review of each Nomination for Associate Fellow.

• The committee members discuss the candidates, resolve any differences, and reach consensus on the candidates they present to the Board of Directors. In determining consensus, only those applicants who receive a unanimous decision in favor of nomination are presented to the Board as candidates for Associate Fellow.
- The committee chair submits the list of all nominated candidates for Associate Fellow, its recommendations for the Associate Fellows award, and a summary of the committee’s findings for all candidates (whether recommended or not) in a written report to the officer to whom the committee reports, who then forwards the report to the Board of Directors. The report includes a summary paragraph and suggested citation for each nominee. The full application package also will be made available to the board upon request to the STC Office or the Associate Fellows Committee chair.

- The Board of Directors considers and votes on the nominees of the Associate Fellows Committee. To be elected an Associate Fellow, a candidate must receive an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of all members of the Board.

- The STC President or another representative of the Board of Directors notifies the chair of the Associate Fellows Committee of the board’s decision.

- Once the Board of Directors has made its decision and notified the committee chair on the nominees, the Associate Fellows Committee notifies the new Associate Fellows of their election and invites them to attend the presentation ceremony at the next STC Summit.

- The Associate Fellows Committee chair notifies unsuccessful applicants, offering suggestions on how the applicants might strengthen their credentials and application for consideration at a future date.

- The Associate Fellows Committee develops biographical information for each newly elected Associate Fellow for the Honors Brochure.

- The STC Office coordinates a review of the biographical information by the newly elected Associate Fellows. The office also prepares recognition certificates, based on wording submitted by the Associate Fellows Committee, and news releases, as appropriate.
Exhibit 1
Reference Request Template

This exhibit provides the reference request template sent by electronic mail to each of the candidates’ references.

Dear <reference person’s name>:

As you know, <candidate’s first name & last name> has been nominated for an Associate Fellowship in STC, and you’ve been listed as a reference. I am a member of STC’s Associate Fellows Committee and am contacting you for additional information about <candidate’s first name>, information that may or may not be included in <his/her> application. Please reply to the following questions, as they apply to your interactions with <candidate’s first name>.

I will use the information you provide to further enlighten the other members of the Associate Fellows Committee about <candidate’s first name>’s qualifications for an Associate Fellowship. After discussion of the qualifications of all candidates, our committee will forward our recommendations to STC’s Board of Directors for their consideration and vote on each candidate. All information you provide to me will be kept confidential within the Associate Fellows Committee.

1) Do you recommend that <candidate’s first name> become an Associate Fellow of STC?
2) How long have you known <candidate’s first name>?
3) In what capacities have you worked with <candidate’s first name>?
4) What do you think are <candidate’s first name>’s main contributions to:
   a) Important work in the field of technical communication?
   b) Notable, original work that has contributed to the advancement of technical communication?
   c) STC?
5) What do you know about <candidate’s first name> that demonstrates contributions toward helping others to advance their careers in technical communication? Toward other personal or professional goals?
6) What other special qualities make <candidate’s first name> especially worthy of being considered for an Associate Fellowship of STC?

Thank you for your help in this exciting process! Please respond by e-mail by <add appropriate date>.

Sincerely,

<my name, phone number, and e-mail address>
Exhibit 2
Evaluation Form Template

This exhibit provides an evaluation form template used by committee members during their review of each nomination for Associate Fellow.

Associate Fellow Criteria
Associate Fellow candidates must have been active in technical communication for at least fifteen (15) years and Members of the Society for at least ten (10) years.

To be considered for the honor of Associate Fellow, a candidate must have attained distinction in the field of technical communication and to the Society. The candidate must have accomplished one or more of the following:

- Been responsible for important work in the field of technical communication.
- Done notable, original work that has contributed to the advancement of technical communication.
- Made a significant contribution to the Society and helped to tell STC’s powerful story.

Evaluation Categories on Recommendation Form

Sec. 1 – Contact Information
Sec. 2 – Career Overview
Sec. 3 – Contributions to the Advancement of Technical Communication
Sec. 4 – Professional Experience
Sec. 5 – Publications, Papers, Presentations, and Electronic Materials
Sec. 6 – Service to STC (Community Level, Regional Level, and Society Level)
Sec. 7 – Honors and Awards
Sec. 8 – Educational Background
Sec. 9 – Affiliations with and Contributions to Other Organizations
Sec. 10 – Additional Information
Sec. 11 – References
Sec. 12 – Candidate’s Biography
Sec. 13 – Suggested Citation
Sec. 14 – Submitting this Application

Evaluation Process
Based on the above criteria, how does the candidate show qualifications for Associate Fellowship in each of the evaluation categories on the application form? Fill in applicable boxes with notes about this candidate.