



Society for
Technical
Communication

Guidelines for Applying for STC Fellow

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Guidelines for Applying for STC Fellow

These guidelines describe the process used by the STC Fellows Committee to evaluate candidates for STC Fellow.

The STC president, subject to approval by the Board of Directors, appoints the Fellows Committee Chair and up to four additional committee members, all of whom must hold the rank of Fellow. The committee nominates candidates to the STC Board of Directors for the rank of Fellow.

Definition of Fellow

Fellow is one of the three honorary ranks in the Society. It is the highest rank that the Society can confer upon a member. The rank of Fellow is conferred by a two-thirds vote of all members of the Board of Directors on Associate Fellows who it believes deserve this highest honor by virtue of their outstanding achievements in and contributions to the arts and science of technical communication, and for sustained and significant service to STC.

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

Fellows retain the membership grade of senior member and the honorary rank of Fellow as long as they remain members of the Society. In addition, the candidate must remain a member in good standing through the award presentation at the STC Summit the following year. If a recommended candidate allows membership to lapse, he or she will not receive the honor.

Qualifications for Rank of Fellow

Elevation from the rank of Associate Fellow to Fellow is not an automatic progression. Associate Fellows must hold that rank for at least three program years before they can receive the rank of Fellow. For example, those members who became Associate Fellows in May 2010 cannot apply for Fellow until fall 2012. If qualified, those applicants become Fellows in May 2013, three program years after receiving the rank of Associate Fellow.

Recommending Candidates for Fellow

The Fellows Committee will contact eligible Associate Fellows and invite them to apply for Fellow. To be considered for nomination to the rank of Fellow, eligible Associate Fellows must submit to the Fellows Committee a current application for each year they wish to be considered and must use the format provided on stc.org.

Before recommending an Associate Fellow as a candidate for Fellow, the Fellows Committee evaluates that Associate Fellow's body of work using the criteria described in the ***Selection Categories and Criteria*** section of these guidelines. The Fellows Committee's evaluations are based on the information in the detailed application provided by eligible Associate Fellows, personal references, and other research. In their deliberations, committee members weigh and consider each candidate's career-long accomplishments in all categories of the application. Continuing excellence since becoming an Associate Fellow is an important factor, but it is not the most important factor. The most weight is placed on the accomplishments over the span of a candidate's career.

For reasons of propriety and potential conflicts of interest, members of the STC Board of Directors may not submit an application for Fellow. Furthermore, members of the board, the Fellows Committee, and the STC Office staff may not serve as references for applicants for Fellow.

Committee Procedures

The basic guidelines for developing a slate of candidates for Fellow are these:

- Each year, after the STC annual Summit, the Fellows Committee Chair invites eligible Associate Fellows to submit an Application for Fellow. This invitation includes information on how an Associate Fellow should submit an application and provides information on how to link to the Application for Fellow and other supporting materials available on the STC web site (<http://www.stc.org/membership/recognition/honors>). Note that Associate Fellows who are current members of the Board of Directors are ineligible to be nominated as candidates for Fellow and are therefore not invited to submit an application.

- To be considered by the Fellows Committee, a candidate's application must be received by the committee chair by the posted deadline for that year. Candidates must submit a current application with three references each year they wish to be considered.
- The committee chair coordinates the review, evaluation, and deliberation process with the other members of the committee and establishes a schedule for completion.
- The committee requests information from each candidate's references and shares the responses among the committee members. Exhibit 1 provides a template for the reference request sent by electronic mail to each reference.
- The committee members evaluate the candidates according to the information provided in their respective packages, information provided by the candidate references, independent 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 ***Selection Categories and 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 Application for Fellow.
- The committee chair collects from and distributes to the committee members the individual evaluations. The committee members discuss the candidates and resolve any differences until they agree on the candidates they recommend to the board. In determining whether to recommend applicants for Fellow to the board, the committee uses a consensus process wherein only those applicants for whom there is a unanimous decision in favor of nomination are recommended to the board as a candidate for Fellow.
- The committee chair submits the committee's nominations for Fellow in a written report to the officer to whom the committee reports, who forwards the report to the STC Board of Directors. The report includes summary paragraphs, the packages of the nominees for Fellow and suggested citations for each. The report will also include about a list of the applicants who were not forwarded to the Board for nomination, with brief explanations of why the candidates were not recommended. The board considers the nominees of the committee. To be elected a Fellow, a candidate must receive an affirmative vote by at least two-thirds of all members of the board.
- Once the board has made its decision on the nominees, the committee notifies the new Fellows of their election.

- The committee develops biographical information for each newly-elected Fellow for the Honors Brochure.
- The committee chair communicates with unsuccessful applicants to suggest how the applicants might strengthen their credentials and application and suggests future courses of action.
- The STC Office coordinates a review of the biographical information by the newly elected Fellows. The office also prepares recognition certificates, based on wording submitted by the committee, and news releases, as appropriate.

Selection Categories and Criteria

The Application for Fellow provides a detailed explanation and guidelines for completing the selection categories described here. The criteria for assessing the information provided by and collected about each candidate, and the percentage weight designated for each category, are:

- ***Professional qualifications (academic and other) and experience***—Significant achievements in and advancement of technical communication over a career in technical communication of at least 15 years. (20 percent).
- ***STC activities***—Sustained and distinguished contributions to STC and to the advancement of the profession through Society activities at both the Society and community level. (20 percent).
- ***Activities with other professional organizations***—Significant contributions to the field of technical communication and advancement of the profession in organizations other than STC (10 percent).

- ***Publications, presentations, and electronic media***—Breadth of experience, original contributions, and advancement of the profession of technical communication (20 percent).
- ***Honors and awards in technical communication***—Widespread recognition of eminence in the profession (20 percent).
- ***Volunteer mentoring and community service that involves sharing communication skills***—Significant contributions, through volunteer/pro bono work, that assist others by using technical communication skills and advance technical communication inside and outside of the profession (10 percent).

The Fellows Committee requires each candidate for Fellow to submit three references who can attest to some facet of the candidate's professional career. The committee recommends strongly that at least one of the three references be a current Fellow.

Exhibit 1—Reference Request Template

This exhibit provides the reference request template sent by email to each reference.

DATE

To: REFERENCE NAME

From: YOUR NAME, Member,
Fellows Committee
Society for Technical Communication

RE: CANDIDATE NAME's Application for STC Fellow

Dear REFERENCE NAME:

You have been named as a reference for CANDIDATE in his/her Application for STC Fellow. Accompanying is a brief Reference Questionnaire. Please take a few minutes to provide answers to the questions and return it to me by email. So that the committee can complete its work in a timely manner, please return the completed questionnaire by November 1, 20XX.

Thank you for your time and for your support of STC and of CANDIDATE'S FIRST NAME's application.

Sincerely,
YOUR NAME

STC Fellow Nomination of CANDIDATE NAME

- 1) Do you recommend that CANDIDATE'S FIRST NAME be elected as a Fellow of the Society for Technical Communication (STC)?
- 2) How long have you known CANDIDATE'S FIRST NAME and in what regard?
- 3) What would you like to share about CANDIDATE'S FIRST NAME that demonstrates HIS/HER contribution to the body of knowledge that comprises our umbrella of professions?
- 4) What would you like to share about CANDIDATE'S FIRST NAME that demonstrates HIS/HER contribution to STC, towards helping others with their respective careers, or both?

5) Being elected Fellow of STC is the highest level of individual honor that can be awarded to an STC member. To be considered for STC Fellow, a member must have first attained the level of STC Associate Fellow. However, the member must also distinguish himself or herself over and above the level of Associate Fellow. From your perspective, what accomplishments and qualities distinguish CANDIDATE'S FIRST NAME as being at the level of an STC Fellow?

6) Is there anything else that you would like to share about CANDIDATE'S FIRST NAME that supports HIS/HER being elected an STC Fellow?

Exhibit 2—Evaluation Form Template

This is the template used by committee members during their review of each Application for Fellow.

Fellow Candidate Evaluation for CANDIDATE NAME

Evaluated by: COMMITTEE MEMBER NAME

Please review the candidate's Application for Fellow and assign point values for each selection category reflecting your evaluation of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses in that category.

Please include comments about the candidate's work in each category below that row. Include comments that describe the candidate's strengths and weaknesses in that category.

Selection Category	Maximum point value	Your score
Professional qualifications (academic and other) Consider: academic degrees, certifications, research, coursework, and the like. Comments:	15 points	
Professional qualifications (work experience) Consider: career progression, job responsibilities, management or academic positions Comments:	15 points	
STC activities Consider: service at the community level, community offices held, service at the Society level, Society offices held, length of service, variety of service Comments:	20 points	
Activities with other professional organizations Consider: type and length of service, if the service contributes to the field of technical communication Comments:	10 points	
Publications, presentations, and electronic media Consider: work produced for the job, articles published in journals or magazines, presentations for conferences, community programs, or work, websites/blogs that contain technical communication content, Comments:	20 points	
Honors and awards in technical communication Consider: STC competition awards, DCSA award, other	10 points	

community-based awards (for example, Member of the Year), awards from other technical communication organizations		
Comments:		
Volunteer mentoring and community service that involves sharing communication skills	10 points	
Comments:		
Total	100 points	