Athena Award

Call for Nominations

Science
Awards for the NWO Domain Science
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1. Introduction and goal

Background

The NWO Domain Science has chosen awards that match the goals that the domain has set for 2019-2022 (see strategy manifesto 2019-2022). These awards recognize the achievements of scientists in various areas of scientific research. There is an award for inspirational teamwork (Team Science Award), an award for science communication for a wider audience (Communication Award), an award to foster diversity (Diversity Initiative Award and Athena Award) and an award for the societal impact of scientific results (Stairway to Impact Award). The awards are intended to reward scientists who have contributed in these areas and to inspire others to do the same. All disciplines in the Science domain are eligible for these awards.

Athena Award

Diversity and inclusion are important for the quality of science and the impact of science on society. In the Netherlands, the percentage of women working in (natural) sciences is low. This percentage is even lower in more senior positions: only 16% of professors in (natural) science disciplines is female (source: LNVH Monitor Vrouwelijke Hoogleraren 2019).

Through the Athena Award, the NWO Domain Science wants to place female role models working in (natural) scientific disciplines in the spotlight. Role models are important for female researchers who are starting their careers. These role models demonstrate that a career in science is possible.

N.B. The Athena Award was originally an award for female role models in chemistry (2015-2019). Now NWO Science will use the name for role model awards for women within the whole Science domain.
2. Requirements for nominations

Who can submit a nomination?

Anyone can submit one or more nominations. However, it is not possible to nominate yourself for the Athena Award.

Who can be nominated?

Candidates for the Athena Award:
- have not received this award previously.
- are female researchers appointed in the fields of science that fall within the NWO Domain Science (Earth Sciences, Astronomy, Chemistry, Computer Science, Life Sciences, Physics, Mathematics)
- are employed by one of the following knowledge institutions:
  - A university located in the Netherlands;
  - A university medical centre located in the Netherlands;
  - KNAW and NWO institutes;
  - the Dutch-Belgian BeamLinE (‘Dubble’) project at the ESRF in Grenoble;
  - NCB Naturalis;
  - Advanced Research Centre for NanoLithography (ARCNL);
  - Princess Máxima Centre for Paediatric Oncology;
  - the Netherlands Cancer Institute.

What could the nominees win?

The Athena Award is for €50,000. The recipients have ample freedom when it comes to spending this sum: staff, equipment, investment, travel and subsistence costs, guest researchers, knowledge utilization activities, and so on. However, the money must be used to contribute to the goal for which the award has been presented, and a minimum spending plan must be approved by NWO for this. The award money must be spent within three years.

When can nominations be submitted?

Nominations must be received by NWO by 30 June 2020, 12:00 CE(S)T.

Specific requirements

A maximum of two winners are chosen per year.

Drafting a nomination

The instructions for drafting a nomination for the Athena Award are enclosed with this brochure.

It is possible to resubmit a nomination that was not previously successful. In this case, the instructions for the year in which the nomination is resubmitted need to be followed.
Awards for the NWO Domain Science

Submitting a nomination

The nominations must be sent to NWO in the form of a PDF file by e-mail (ENWprijzen@nwo.nl).
3. Assessment procedure

Procedure

The first step in the assessment procedure is to check whether the nomination is complete. The relevant requirements are provided in this Call for Nominations.

The NWO Code of Conduct on Conflicts of Interest applies to all individuals and NWO staff involved in the assessment and/or decision-making process.

The nominations are assessed in relation to the criteria by a committee, as described below. The committee advises the board of the NWO Domain Science regarding potential winners, and in doing so will strive to ensure that the nominations are distributed across the domain with no more than one nomination per (primary) discipline.

The Board of NWO Domain Science will make the decision regarding the winners. In addition to the committee’s advice, policy considerations may also play a role, such as distribution across disciplines. Those who have submitted impressive nominations which have not been selected as winners will be given the opportunity to update their nomination for the next round if they wish to be considered again.

The awards will be awarded at the relevant national (disciplinary) congresses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicative timeline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 June 2020, by 12:00 CET.</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting complete nominations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October / November 2020</td>
<td>Decision made by NWO Domain Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 2020</td>
<td>Award winners announced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020/2021</td>
<td>Awards presented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Criteria

Applications are assessed according to the following criteria:
- The nominee is an example / source of inspiration for young researchers who aspire to a career in science;
- The nominee stands out through her scientific achievements. The emphasis is on the quality of the research, but other aspects are also considered, such as the impact of the research, leadership, teaching skills and outreach and/or science communication.

Composition of the committee

The selection committee is made up of scientists and experts, both men and women, both senior and junior, and from various disciplines within the Science domain. The NWO Code of Conduct on Conflicts of Interest is applicable.
4. Contacting us and other information

Contact

For questions regarding the Athena Award and this Call for Nominations, please contact: Eveline Mezger, ENWprijzen@nwo.nl

Other information

Information about the award policy of the NWO Domain Science can be found on the NWO website. Information about other awards in the Science domain can also be found there.

This brochure is a translation of the Dutch language brochure. In case of difference in interpretation between the two texts, the Dutch language brochure is leading.
5. Appendices

Instructions for drafting a nomination for the Athena Award

The nominations must be written in English. The nomination must make clear why the candidate has been nominated. Describe clearly why the candidate is a true role model and source of inspiration for other (younger) researchers, in addition to describing his/her scientific achievements.

The nomination must include the following sections.
1. Cover page providing general information about the candidates and the person nominating her. The relevant form can be downloaded from the website www.nwo.nl/athena-award.
2. The nomination itself; the nominator must comply with the assessment criteria mentioned in the brochure.
3. Supporting documentation, such as a short narrative CV of the nominee containing information relevant to the award and, for example, a top 5 list of publications with substantiation. In addition, any supporting letters from third parties may also be added. The supporting documentation should not exceed 5 pages in length.

Save the form, the nomination and the appendices as a pdf and send these to ENWprijzen@nwo.nl, with the words ‘Athena Award + [the name of the candidate]’ in the subject field.

It is advisable to take to account of the fact that the selection committee is composed of representatives from across the whole breadth of the domain and that some members may not be experts in the relevant field.