Communication Initiative Award

Call for Nominations

Science
Awards for the NWO Domain Science

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Awards for the NWO Domain Science

1. Introduction

The NWO Domain Science has five awards that were developed based on the strategic goals of the domain (see strategy manifesto 2019-2022). These goals are still supported by the domain. In 2024 these awards will be presented for the fifth time in this format. The awards recognise 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 to a wider audience (Communication Initiative Award), awards to foster diversity (Diversity & Inclusion 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.
2. Goal of the Communication Initiative Award

With the Communication Initiative Award, NWO Domain Science wants to draw particular attention to researchers who successfully communicate the results of their research to a broad public. The good communication of scientific results is crucial for strengthening the societal impact of science. For science to be connected with society, it must not only be accessible but also approachable, and people must feel they can understand it.

The aim of the award is to make successful and inspiring science communication initiatives from researchers visible. Initiatives have reached a public that would not have been made aware of the knowledge from the research area concerned had the initiatives not taken place. Furthermore, the initiatives have demonstrably led to more involvement from society in the research area of the initiators. With the Communication Initiative Award, initiators are rewarded for successful science communication about their own research area and are encouraged to continue along this path.

It is important that the nominee(s) mostly conduct(s) scientific research within the Domain Science (Earth and Environmental Sciences, Astronomy, Chemistry, Computer Science, Life Sciences, Physics, Mathematics).
3. Requirements for nominations

Who can submit a nomination?

Anyone can submit one or more nominations. It is possible to nominate your own initiative for the Communication Initiative Award.

Who can be nominated?

For the Communication Initiative Award multiple persons can be nominated together.

Nominees for the Communication Initiative Award

- are one or more researchers of whom a majority has not received the award previously.
- are one or more researchers of whom a majority is employed by one of the following knowledge institutions:
  - A university located in the Kingdom of the Netherlands;
  - A university medical centre;
  - KNAW and NWO institutes;
  - the Netherlands Cancer Institute;
  - the Max Planck Institute for psycholinguistics in Nijmegen;
  - Naturalis;
  - Advanced Research Centre for NanoLithography (ARCNL);
  - Princess Máxima Center.

The number of people behind the initiative is not important; it is possible that the initiative was organised by just one person. The academic experience of the person(s) involved is not important.

What can the prize be used for?

The Communication Initiative Award is a sum of € 50,000. The recipients may spend the prize on activities that contribute to the purpose of this prize. 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, a minimum spending plan must be approved by NWO. This prize can only be spent by persons employed by the knowledge institutions as mentioned in “Who can be nominated?”. The prize must be spent within three years of receipt of the award letter.

When can nominations be submitted?

Nominations must be received by NWO at latest by 13 June 2024, 14:00:00 CEST.

Specific requirements

A maximum of € 50,000 is available for this Call for Nominations. Only one nomination can be awarded.

Drafting a nomination

The nomination form must be used for nominations. The form can be downloaded from the website. The nominations must be written in English and must be DORA compliant.

The nomination form contains the following elements:
Awards for the NWO Domain Science

1. A cover page (mandatory) with general information about the nominee(s) and the applicant.

2. A motivational letter (mandatory, maximum two pages), in which the applicant explains why the initiative should win the Award and how the assessment criteria stated in Call for Nominations apply to the initiative.

3. Supporting documentation (maximum five pages), such as supporting (visual) material and any supporting letters from third parties.

Additional notes:
It is advisable to take to account of the fact that the committee is composed of representatives from different disciplines of the ENW Science domain and that some members may not be experts in the relevant field.

Submitting a nomination

The completed nomination form should be sent in pdf-format to ENWprijzen@nwo.nl, with the words ‘Communication Initiative Award + [the name of the initiative]’ in the subject field.

Formal conditions for submission

NWO will assess your nomination against the conditions listed below. Your nomination will only be admitted to the assessment procedure if it meets these conditions. After submitting your nomination, NWO requests you to be available to implement any possible administrative corrections so that you can (still) meet the conditions for submission.

These conditions are:
− the nominee(s) meets/meet the conditions stated in Section 3;
− the nomination complies with the DORA guidelines as described in Section 4;
− the nomination form is, after a possible request to make additions or changes, complete and filled out according to the instructions;
− the nomination is received before the deadline;
− the nomination is written in English.
4. **Assessment procedure**

This chapter first describes the assessment according to the DORA principles and the course of the assessment procedure. Second, it states the criteria that the assessment committee will use to assess your nomination.

The NWO Code for Dealing with Personal Interests applies to all persons and NWO employees involved in the assessment and/or decision-making process (Code for Dealing with Personal Interests | NWO).

NWO strives to achieve an inclusive culture where there is no place for conscious or unconscious barriers due to cultural, ethnic or religious background, gender, sexual orientation, health or age (Diversity and inclusion | NWO). NWO encourages members of an assessment committee to be actively aware of implicit associations and to try to minimise these. NWO will provide them with information about concrete ways of improving the assessment of a nomination.

**The San Francisco Declaration (DORA)**

NWO is a signatory to the San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA). DORA is a worldwide initiative that aims to improve the way research and researchers are assessed. DORA contains recommendations for research funders, research institutions, scientific journals and other parties.

DORA aims to reduce the uncritical use of bibliometric indicators and obviate unconscious bias in the assessment of research and researchers. DORA’s overarching philosophy is that research should be evaluated on its own merits rather than on the basis of surrogate measures, such as the journal in which the research is published.

When assessing the scientific track record of nominees, NWO makes use of a broad definition of scientific output.

NWO requests committee members not to rely on indicators such as the Journal Impact Factor or the h-index when assessing nominations. Applicants are not allowed to mention these in their nominations. You are, however, allowed to list other scientific products besides publications, such as datasets, patents, software and code, et cetera.

For more information on how NWO is implementing the principles of DORA, see DORA | NWO.

**Procedure**

The nomination procedure consists of the following steps once the nomination has been submitted:

1. **Admissibility of the nomination;**
   - As soon as possible after you have submitted your nomination, you will hear from NWO whether or not your nomination will be taken into consideration. NWO will determine this based on several administrative-technical criteria (see the formal conditions for submission, Section 3). NWO can only take your nomination into consideration if it meets these conditions. NWO may approach you with any possible administrative corrections that need to be made so that your nomination can (still) meet the conditions for submission. You will be given one opportunity to make the corrections, and you will be given five working days to do this.
2. **Pre-advice assessment committee;**

The nominations for the Science Domain awards are assessed by four award committees: a committee for the Team Science Award, a committee for the Communication Initiative Award, a committee for the Stairway to Impact Award and one committee for the two diversity awards, the Athena Award and the Diversity & Inclusion Initiative Award.

After this, the nominations will be submitted for comments to several members of the assessment committee (the pre-advisers). The pre-advisers will provide a written substantive and reasoned response to the nominations. They will formulate these comments based on the substantive assessment criteria and will give the nominations a numerical score per assessment criterion. For this, the NWO score table will be used (on a scale of 1 to 9, where “1” is excellent and “9” unsatisfactory).

3. **Meeting of the assessment committee;**

The committee will make its own assessment based on the available material. Although the pre-advises will ‘guide’ the final assessment to a large extent, it will not be blindly accepted without question by the committee. The committee will consider and compare the arguments of the pre-advisers (also amongst each other) and draw up a written recommendation addressed to the NWO Science Domain board about the quality and ranking of the nominations. This recommendation is based on the assessment criteria. The nomination must receive an overall qualification of at least “good” to be eligible for an award.

If, after the discussion of the nominations, two or more of the nominations cannot be distinguished from each other based on their weighted total score, then this will result in an *ex aequo* situation.

*Ex aequo*

NWO understands ex aequo to be a situation in which two or more nominations based on their weighted score cannot be distinguished from each other. An ex aequo situation is relevant with respect to the selection border. The existence of an ex aequo situation is determined as follows. The starting point in this process is the ranking drawn up by the assessment committee, with the final scores rounded down to two decimal points. All nominations with a score that is within 0.05 or less of the score of the first-ranked nomination will be considered. In this way, the nominations that are equal within a score of 0.1 will be selected. If an ex aequo situation occurs at the selection border, then the assessment committee, with the help of an (anonymous) majority vote, will determine the ranking (in accordance with Article 2.2.7, third paragraph, sub a, part iv of the NWO Grant Rules 2017). If this vote also fails to provide a resolution, or if it is deemed to be undesirable to vote, then the ex aequo situation will be sent onto the decision-making body. The decision making body will favour the nomination from the research discipline in which the fewest awards will be granted, taking into account the advice of the four assessment committees.

4. **Decision-making**

Finally, the NWO Science Domain board will assess the procedure followed as well as the advice from the assessment committees. They will subsequently determine the final qualifications and make a decision over awarding or rejecting the nominations.

After the decision of the NWO Science Domain board, the applicants and the winners will be informed. The prizes will be awarded at appropriate national (disciplinary) conferences.
Indicative timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 June 2024, by 14:00:00 CEST.</td>
<td>Deadline for submitting complete nominations</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 2024</td>
<td>Committee meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 2024</td>
<td>Decision by the NWO Domain Science board</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 2024</td>
<td>Award winners announced</td>
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<tr>
<td>2024/2025</td>
<td>Awards presented at scientific conferences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Criteria

The selection committee will first of all assess whether the nomination satisfies the threshold criterion. If the nomination does not satisfy the threshold criterion, then it will not be assessed against the four criteria and will therefore not compete for the award. The threshold criterion is:

- The nominated individual(s) mostly conduct(s) research in the Domain Science (Earth and Environmental Sciences, Astronomy, Chemistry, Computer Science, Life Sciences, Physics, Mathematics).

NWO Domain Science wants to render visible and further encourage successful science communication by researchers about their research area. That is why the following criteria have been chosen, which each have equal weighting:

- The initiative is a science communication initiative by researchers about their research area: the initiative has mostly been set up by the researcher(s), the communication mostly concerns their own research area and the researcher(s) does/do not have science communication as a core task;
- The science communication initiative brings research results from their own research area to the attention of new target groups outside of their own research area.
- The science communication initiative has led to more involvement from society in the researcher’s/researchers’ research area, for example because the initiative has made a difference for (certain groups) of society or inspires public discussion.
- The science communication initiative is original and innovative.

Composition of the committee

The assessment committee is composed of a diverse group of scientists and experts who have affinity with and experience in the field of science communication within the Science domain.
5. Contacting us and other information

Contact

For questions regarding the Communication Initiative Award and this Call for Nominations, please contact: Wessel Hieselaar, ENWprijzen@nwo.nl, or by phone at +31 70 3494196.

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.

NWO processes the personal data it receives in the context of this Call for Nominations in accordance with the NWO Privacy Statement.

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

NWO might approach applicants and nominees for an evaluation of the procedure and/or research programme.