



**SCIENTIST PROFESSIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
(SCIPAC)**

**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES OF THE  
AWARDS SUBCOMMITTEE**

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## **I. PURPOSE/GOALS**

The purpose of this standard operation procedure (SOP) is to provide information on the duties and responsibilities for members of the SciPAC Awards Subcommittee, as well as describe the operations and procedures currently employed by this subcommittee.

The goal of the SciPAC Awards Subcommittee is to recognize and promote the notable accomplishments of Scientist officers. This goal is accomplished by the presentation of the following awards to Scientist officers:

- Junior Scientist of the Year Award
- Senior Scientist of the Year Award
- Responder of the Year Award
- Mentor of the Year Award
- Retiring Scientist Distinguished Service Award
- Special Assignment Award
- Any other award where one SciPAC nominee must be selected from amongst many (e.g. JOAG Awards)

## **II. GOVERNING BODY AND OFFICERS**

### **a. Organization**

#### **i. Structure**

The Awards Subcommittee consists of a chair, a group of award reviewers, and if the option for a co-chair is available, then one will be selected by the SciPAC Chair and/or the Subcommittee Chair.

#### **ii. Size**

The Awards Subcommittee shall consist of 4-5 senior-level Scientist Officers, plus the Chair and Co-Chair.

#### **iii. Representation**

The Awards Subcommittee Chair will recommend five (and two alternate) Senior Scientists to the Chief Professional Officer (CPO) each year to serve as award reviewers. Upon approval of these officers by the CPO, the Awards Subcommittee Chair will contact these individuals to assess their interest in participating. If any of the five officers are unable or unwilling to participate in the subcommittee, then the Awards Subcommittee Chair will contact the alternates in order. The diversity of award reviewers shall reflect the diversity of Scientists, their disciplines, and agencies. In addition, the award reviewers shall demonstrate significant involvement in SciPAC either as a current or past voting

member. This may include former SciPAC Chairs and/or previous award winners. Reviewers and the Awards Subcommittee Co-Chair shall not be able to review any award in which he/she is a nominee. The Awards Subcommittee Chair will not be able to be nominated for any awards during the year he/she asks in this role.

**b. Officers – Roles & Responsibilities**

The Awards Subcommittee shall review nomination packages submitted by Scientist officers and proactively encourage SciPAC members to nominate Commissioned Corps officers for awards. The subcommittee shall provide for distribution, notices and reminders of award schedules.

**i. Chair**

The Awards Subcommittee Chair shall:

- Propose Subcommittee members to the CPO for approval and then contact these officers;
- Prepare, guide, and schedule annual award nominations;
- Organize nomination packet reviews;
- Forward the final selections and justifications to the SciPAC Chair for review, and subsequently to the CPO for review;
- Write Letters of Appreciation for all Subcommittee members;
- Develop draft example award write-ups for scientist supervisors to assist them in submitting award nominations – if requested;
- Prepare the awards brief and order, pick up, and deliver the plaques to the CPO or designee prior to their travel to Category Day;
- Submit award winner photos and biographies to the SciPAC Website and Visibility Chairs;
- Prepare notifications to award selectees and non-selectees;
- Update SOP as needed;
- Provide monthly committee reports on the SciPAC call.

The Awards Subcommittee Chair will be the only member of the Awards Subcommittee who is aware of the voting results during the nomination package review process.

**ii. Co-Chair**

The Awards Subcommittee Co-Chair shall:

- Support the Chair as needed including when the Chair is unavailable;
- Review nominations packages in a non-voting capacity to serve as a tie-breaker if needed;

- Serve as an additional voting reviewer of nomination packages if needed, for example if there are a large number of nominations for a particular award.

The Awards Subcommittee Co-Chair shall not be aware of the voting results during the nomination package review process.

### **iii. Awards Reviewers**

Reviewers will review the nomination packages assigned to them by the Awards Subcommittee Chair and then rank all the nominees using a numeric scale based upon the number of nomination packages they have reviewed, with the highest number being the most qualified nominee. Reviewers shall not discuss the nomination packages with the other Reviewers or the Awards Subcommittee Co-Chair during the nomination package review process. In the case of an award that received a large number of nomination packages, each nomination package will be reviewed and scored by at least three different Reviewers (but not the same three Reviewers). The Awards Subcommittee Chair will create the matrix for how the nomination packages will be reviewed.

Once all of the Reviewers have reviewed their assign nomination packages, they will submit their rankings to the Awards Subcommittee Chair only. The Awards Subcommittee Chair will then collate the results and schedule a discussion of the award. The Reviewers and the Awards Subcommittee Chair and Co-Chair will discuss their evaluations of the nomination packages, compare the results of the rankings and determine a final selection. In the case of a tie, the rankings from the Awards Subcommittee Co-Chair will be included in the results. Any undecided award selection shall be determined by the Awards Subcommittee Chair.

### **iv. Special Consideration**

All nomination for the awards and the Awards Subcommittee discussions and reviews are confidential and shall not to be discussed outside of the Awards Subcommittee nomination review meetings.

## **III. OPERATIONS AND PROCEDURES**

### **a. Meetings**

The Awards Subcommittee shall convene after each award nomination deadline and the Awards Subcommittee Chair has provided them at least ten business days to review the nomination packages.

**b. Award Timelines**

- i.** The Scientist Responder of the Year award process shall be completed by no later than 01 December of each year. The call for nominations should be announced in mid-September, ensuring the CPO has sufficient time to submit the Scientist nominee's package to the Director of OFRD in time for the USPHS Responder of the Year competition.
- ii.** The Junior, Senior Scientist, and Mentor of the Year awards process shall be conducted in the spring of each year. The call for nominations should be announced in February, leaving sufficient time to make arrangements for the awards to be presented during the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium.
- iii.** A time period greater than three weeks and no more than one month shall be allowed between the initial call for award nominations and the deadline for receipt of nomination packets.

**c. Award Eligibility, Nomination and Submission**

**i. Award Eligibility**

Individual award eligibility criteria are as follows:

- The Scientist Responder of the Year: Active duty PHS Scientist Officers
- Senior Scientist of the Year: Active duty PHS Scientist Officers at the rank of O-5 or higher
- Junior Scientist of the Year: Active duty PHS Scientist Officers at the rank of O-4 or lower
- Mentor of the Year: Active-duty PHS Scientist Officers at the rank of O-4 or above are eligible. No distinction will be made based on clinical/research/regulatory/and management tracks.

**ii. Award Nomination**

Award candidates may be nominated by the following:

- Self (No current Executive Board member may self-nominate)
- Supervisor (Either Civilian or Active Duty Officer)
- Other Officer
- Civilian

Each award candidate should only be nominated by one nominator including the candidate if self-nominated.

**iii. Award Submission**

Submission requirements differ for the individual awards (see below). In general, all competitive awards require a nomination form and a descriptive narrative.

**d. Awards and Rating Criteria**

**i. Scientist Responder of the Year**

This award recognizes a Scientist Officer for his or her impact on emergency preparedness and disaster response and contributions to local, national, or international public health threats. The awardee is selected in December of each year for accomplishments during the previous fiscal year (01 October through 30 September).

The following criteria, occurring during the 12 months period for which the award covers, shall be used to rate the nominations:

- A one-time impact on public health preparedness and response (50 points);
- Career contributions to emergency preparedness and/or disaster response (30 points);
- Nominee's role in deployments and the impact thereof (10 points);
- Training and education applicable to preparedness and response (5 points);
- Publications and presentations in the public arena related to preparedness and response (5 points).

**ii. Derek Dunn Memorial (Senior) Scientist Officer of the Year**

The Derek Dunn Memorial (Senior) Scientist of the Year award was named in memory of CAPT Derek Dunn for his dedicated service to the United States Public Health Service Scientist Category and the scientific community. CAPT Dunn, who passed away in 2002, was the Acting Associate Director of Science for the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health and an adjunct professor at University of Cincinnati College and Miami University, and a mentor to many scientists.

This award recognizes a senior-level Scientist Officer for his or her achievements in a professional field, career growth and development, leadership skills, and PHS involvement and commitment. Active duty PHS Scientist Officers at the rank of O-5 or higher are eligible. No distinction will be made based on clinical/research/regulatory/and management tracks. Past recipients of the Young Scientist of the Year Award remain eligible.

The Senior Scientist of the Year award is evaluated for the following criteria.

**1. Professional Achievement(s) (30 points)**

The Officer has attained significant achievements in a professional field, which in turn have advanced the mission of the PHS or had a beneficial impact on the nation's health and health care services. Achievements and contributions may be judged on the basis of many factors, including publications, patents, designing and implementing public health programs. But more importantly a sustained commitment of time and/or outstanding skill in biomedical research as a Clinical Scientist Officer, an Environmental Health Scientist Officer, a Health Education Scientist Officer, a Research Scientist Officer, a Research Support Scientist Officer, a Regulatory Scientist Officer, or a Program Management Officer. The Officer's achievements have been acknowledged by awards and letters of recognition from colleagues, supervisors, and professional organizations.

**2. Career Growth, Development and Leadership Skills (40 points)**

The Officer has demonstrated professional growth and development as evidenced by engaging and contributing to more complex tasks and by assuming positions of increasing responsibility. Leadership positions held in any capacity are a demonstration of career growth and development and evidence that the Officer is regarded as a senior professional contributor to the field of expertise. The Officer serves as an exemplary role model for Junior Officers and others by balancing commitments of time and energy to their profession, the Commissioned Corps, civic and humanitarian activities.

**3. PHS Involvement and Commitment (30 points)**

The Officer promotes and supports the mission of the Commissioned Corps by sustained involvement in Commissioned Corps professional advisory groups or committees, Division of Commissioned Personnel Boards and Commissioned Corps related activities. For example, the Officer may be a member of the Commissioned Corps Readiness Force (CCRF), a Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) or the Commissioned Corps Music Ensemble. Membership and participation in PHS professional organizations such as COA, ROA and AMSUS demonstrate commitment and dedication to the Commissioned Corps as well as a high level of Corps pride and honor. The Officer wears the uniform on a regular basis. The Officer continues to be a visible and active Scientist Category officer even after fulfilling more traditional roles such as SciPAC membership and leadership, leadership in local COA chapters, etc.

**iii. Junior Scientist Officer of the Year**

This award recognizes a junior-level Scientist Officer for his or her achievements in a professional field, career growth and development, leadership skills, and PHS involvement and commitment. Active duty PHS Scientist Officers at the rank of O-4 or below are eligible. No distinction will be made based on clinical/research/regulatory/and management tracks.

The Junior Scientist of the Year award is evaluated for the following criteria.

**1. Professional Development (35 Points)**

The Officer demonstrates professional development by participating in continuing education and professional training and by taking advantage of Officer Mentorship programs when available. Membership and/or offices held in professional organizations or participation in PHS task forces and workgroups demonstrate professional development. Work performance or presentations at professional meetings in a capacity mature for a person of similar education and experience are to be noted. The Officer's pride and dedication to the Commissioned Corps are demonstrated by activities such as completion of the Basic Officer Training Course (BOTC), membership and participation in COA or similar organizations, membership in CCRF, DMAT or the Commissioned Corps Music Ensemble and participation in Scientist PAC activities. The officer wears the uniform on a regular basis.

**2. Achievements (35 Points)**

The Officer's has job-related accomplishments or significant achievements in a professional field as evidenced by sustained or outstanding performance beyond that of the Officer's peers. Examples of achievements include skillful management of difficult, complex tasks or a heavy workload, development or improvement of service programs. These achievements should exceed job requirements. Evidence for achievements may include awards or letters of recognition from supervisors, the PHS, or professional associations.

**3. PHS Involvement and Commitment (30 points)**

The Officer promotes and supports the mission and policies of the Commissioned Corps by wearing the uniform with pride and distinction, involvement in Commissioned Corps professional advisory groups or committees, Division of Commissioned Personnel Boards, and Commissioned Corps related activities. For example, the Officer may be a member of a Tier deployment team for OFRD or other deployable element, the Commissioned Corps Honor Guard, or the Commissioned Corps Music Ensemble. Membership and participation in USPHS professional organizations such as COA, ROA, and

AMSUS demonstrate commitment and dedication to the Commissioned Corps as well as a high level of Corps pride and honor. The Officer continues to be a visible and active Scientist Officer even after fulfilling more traditional roles such as SciPAC membership and leadership, leadership in local COA chapters, recruitment activities, etc.

#### **iv. Mentor of the Year Award**

The Scientist Professional Advisory Committee (SciPAC) established the Scientist Mentor of the Year Award in 2015 to recognize Commissioned Officers in the Scientist Category who provided exceptional mentorship to others in the field of public health. Service as a mentor to U.S. Public Health Service (USPHS) Officers, members of other services and civilians has significantly contributed to the health of the Nation and the mission of the USPHS by fostering the growth and development of individuals in the public health field. The Mentor of the Year Awardee is an exemplary display of the Commissioned Corps Core values of Leadership, Service, Integrity, and Excellence.

The Mentor of the Year Award is evaluated for the following criteria:

##### **1. Scope of the Mentoring Relationship (55 points)**

The scope of the relationship should include a description of the details of the mentoring relationship, including the specific areas that were addressed during the relationship (e.g., promotion preparation, deployment-related activities, OPDIV-related activities, etc.). Any mentee goals that were set with the mentor and the status of meeting these goals should also be described. The scope is not necessarily related to the length of the relationship and the application should clearly define the role the mentor had in advancing the mentee's development. Long-term, but narrowly focused, mentoring relationships may be judged lower than short-term ones that encompass many facets of officership and were highly interactive. For example, while promotion preparation is an important part of the mentor/mentee relationship, a multi-year relationship solely focused on promotion preparation may be scored lower than a shorter relationship that included multiple facets of officership and personal/professional development.

##### **2. Impact of the Mentoring Relationship (35 points)**

The impact of the mentoring relationship should be clearly defined. Any successes on the part of the mentee that can be tied to the mentoring relationship should cause the nomination to be judged highly. For example, if

the mentoring relationship revolves around an award or publication, and the mentee receives the award or the publication is accepted, these would be counted as successes. Success can also be related to work done at the mentees OPDIV or may be related to the mentor's assistance with career mobility. In addition, successes that have a demonstrated public health impact above and beyond an effect on the mentee that can be tied to the mentoring relationship will be judged highly.

### **3. Duration and Frequency of the Mentoring Relationship (10 points)**

The overall duration of the mentoring relationship is an important metric for measuring the success of the relationship, as highly impactful long-term mentoring relationships should be judged highly. Mentoring relationships that span multiple ranks and/or as the mentor or mentee moved to different positions/OPDIVs should also be judged highly. The frequency of interactions should also be an important consideration.

Multiple Nominations: For mentors with multiple nomination packages, each package should be evaluated and scored independently. The nominee's score is to be calculated as the highest of the scores for all nomination packages for that mentee, plus up to 5 bonus points, awarded based on the score of the second nomination package (i.e., the lower scoring of the two packages for nominees with two packages). Bonus points to be awarded as follows: A second package with a total score of 0-20 points =1 bonus point, 20-40 points=2 bonus points, 40-60 points=3 bonus points, 60-80 points=4 bonus points, and 80-100 points=5 bonus points).

### **v. Retiring Scientist Award**

Each year, the CPO, may recognize retiring Scientists in up to two different forms at his or her discretion:

- Retiring Scientist Appreciation Letter: a letter of appreciation sent to all retiring Scientists, or
- Retiring Scientist Distinguished Service Award: in the form of a plaque or other recognition commensurate with extraordinary service to the category. Such Scientists have made significant contributions during their years of service to the Scientist Category and the Public Health Service. Such professional contributions are unique and not otherwise demonstrated by peers. This retiring Officer may have demonstrated exemplary leadership and personal judgment in unusual circumstances leading to a successful outcome or proactive activities that significantly improve health conditions and save lives or resources.

The Retiring Scientist Distinguished Service Award is non-competitive and candidates will include Scientists who are retiring from the Public Health Service with 20 to 30 years of service and are selected at the discretion of the CPO.

Depending on the location, the CPO, or his/her designee, will attend and recognize retiring Scientists at their formal retirement ceremonies.

**e. Award Presentations**

An awards ceremony will be held during the Scientist Category Day Luncheon at the annual USPHS Scientific and Training Symposium. Recipients of the awards will receive a plaque signed by the CPO and a letter of special recognition from SciPAC.

**IV. SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

**a. Requirements**

Awards Subcommittee members must be full-time PHS officers who meet the eligibility requirements for initial appointment to the Scientist category and personnel systems. In addition, Awards Subcommittee members must have demonstrated significant involvement in SciPAC, such as serving as a current or past voting member.

**b. Letter of Appreciation**

All Awards Subcommittee members will be formally recognized for their contribution to the subcommittee with a letter from the CPO at the end of each year which may be placed in the officer's OPF.

**V. TRANSITIONING**

The out-going Awards Chair and Co-chair will assist the incoming Chair and Co-chair with any procedural concerns during their transitioning period and will continue to provide guidance throughout their term if requested.

**VI. REFERENCES**

None

**VII. ATTACHMENTS**

None