Equality of Opportunity in Geosciences: The EGU Awards Committee experience

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EGU Awards and Medals Programme

Every year, the EGU awards & medals programme recognises eminent scientists for their outstanding research contribution in Earth, planetary, and space sciences. In addition, it identifies the awardees as role models for the next generation of early career scientists to foster geoscience research.

Winners of EGU medals or awards can be nominated as EGU ambassadors. In this role, they are delegated to attend meetings hosted by other organisations, and to offer special presentations and lectures labelled as EGU contributions.

The EGU awards & medals programme features Union medals, the most prestigious awards, for life-time achievements or exceptional contributions to science as well as Union awards, such as the Anna Richter Award for Outstanding Early Career Scientists. At the division level, the EGU awards various medals for active scientists (27 in total), as well as the Division Outstanding Early Career Scientists Awards (22 in total). The list of all recipients of EGU awards and medals, including Union, division and General Assembly awards, is available in the EGU web pages, https://www.egu.eu/awards-medals/.


Total # of Nominations : EGU has received a total of 975 nominations for the 2014, 2015, 2016 2018 and 2019 Union, Division and OECS medals & awards. % 22.1 of the nominees were female.

Total # of Medallist and Awardees : EGU has awarded total of 270 medals and awards during the period 2014-2019. % 21.4 of the medallists and awardees were female.

Union & Division Medals 2019 – Geographical distribution and gender equality

NOMINATIONS: EGU has received total of 109 nominations for the 2014, 2015, 2016 2018 and 2019 Union, Division and OECS medals. Among the nominators, gender is more balanced among younger EGU members. The numbers are from 2016.

Gender balance & Age

Numbers for awarded union & division medals and OECS awards over the period 2018-2019 are shown below. In 2019, the average age of the recipients were 75 (union), 58 (division) and 35 (OECS), respectively. The gender balance is improved as the medallists and awardees gets younger.

Concluding Remarks

- The EGU data show that there is no bias in the selection process, the statistic are similar for nominees and medallists.
- Majority of nominations are from Western Europe and USA.
- There is a clear majority of male members in the geoscience community. The gender is more balanced among younger EGU members. As the careers of young researchers progress, we should expect improvement in gender balance.
- These numbers draws the attention of the community on the diversity and equal opportunities already at the nominations and candidates.
- Nominations for all the medals and awards are to be submitted online by 15 June of each year (absolute deadline). Check the EGU web pages for further information https://www.egu.eu/awards-medals/proposal-and-selection-of-candidates.