

Geological Society of America
Fellowship Nominations — Frequently Asked Questions and Tips

FAQ Topics

- [General](#)
- [Nomination Letter](#)
- [Nomination Categories](#)
- [Involvement/participation with GSA](#)
- [Tips](#)

General

What are the most important things that the Membership and Fellowship Committee is looking for in a nomination?

For example, while numbers such as citation indexes and students taught and mentored succinctly tell part of a career, it is more important to include a narrative that explains how specific research had an impact on others' research or how specific students were affected by teaching. Similarly, achievements in other Nomination Categories (and elements thereof) should be supported by a narrative providing context and demonstrating impact. Because GSA strives to be a diverse and inclusive society, information about obstacles overcome on the way to a nominee's achievements will be helpful to the Membership and Fellowship Committee.

When does the election to Fellowship take place?

The Membership and Fellowship Committee members review all complete and qualified nominations independently and then again collectively at their meeting in March or April. Nominees that are agreed upon are required to complete the online ethics disclosure form and are then forwarded to Council for approval and election into Fellowship at the GSA Spring Council meeting (April or May). Nominators are notified of the result shortly after the Council meeting.

How many nominations can I support in a given year?

Up to two, but only one as primary nominator. You can support two as secondary nominator OR one as primary and one as secondary nominator, but you cannot be the primary nominator for two nominations.

What is the difference between the primary nominator and secondary nominators?

The primary nominator initiates the nomination, completes the nomination form, and uploads the required supporting documents. Any GSA member or fellow in good standing can be the primary nominator. The secondary nominators are GSA members or fellows who endorse the nomination letter and support the nomination.

Do I need to submit a bibliography of my nominee?

If your nomination is based on the publication record of the nominee, please submit a bibliography, otherwise it is optional.

What file format is required?

Please submit documents only as PDF files. Word, text, excel and other file formats are not accepted.

Nomination Letter

Can I submit additional letters of support beyond the 2-page nomination letter?

Unfortunately, we are unable to accept additional support letters. Nominations which have excessive documentation beyond the required documentations will regrettably be turned down.

Can I select more than three supporting nominators?

No. In addition to the primary nominator, you may only select up to 3 (minimum of 2) supporting nominators. All supporting nominators must be GSA members in good standing. At least one of the nominators (primary or secondary) must be a GSA Fellow.

What are acceptable alternatives to physical signatures on the nomination letter?

A physical signature is not required. As a minimum, the names and affiliations of the nominator and supporters must be listed, along with some indication that each of them have seen and endorsed the nomination. Scans of physical signatures, online signatures, electronic signatures, or a short statement of endorsement are all acceptable.

Nomination Categories

What is a Nomination Category, and what is its significance in the nomination process?

Nomination Categories are broad groupings of accomplishments and contributions to the geosciences. Many Fellows devote their careers to elements within one or two of these categories. A successful nomination should focus on the accomplishments and the impact of those efforts on the geoscience community and GSA.

How many Nomination Categories can be addressed by a nomination package?

We suggest addressing no more than three (3) elements from any of the Categories. A nominator could speak to the nominee's achievement in one element of a category – e.g., the publication record of the nominee. Another possibility is to address two elements of one Category and another of a second Category. For example, publication of geologic maps, publications, and a teaching award recognition. Another scenario is to discuss the nominee's contributions in one element, each, within three different Categories.

The revised list of nomination categories is pretty long. Is this meant to require more from a nominee than expected in the past and thus be more exclusive?

No. The list has been expanded to be MORE inclusive with an eye towards GSA members that appear to have been underrepresented in the past (e.g., people engaged with industry, government).

What if a nominee has less than 15 years professional experience?

Fellowship requires both distinguished and sustained contributions but, recognizing that individual career paths may differ, nominees with less than 15 years of experience may be considered if the nominee has made contributions at the highest level of the geoscience profession. The outstanding nature of the nominee's contributions must be explicitly documented. Exactly how these contributions would offset the requirement for sustained contributions must be clearly explained in the nomination letter.

Involvement/Participation with GSA

How important is involvement with GSA?

Award of Fellowship is based on contributions made to GSA as well as to the geosciences. There are many avenues that a nominee may have contributed to the Society and these should be noted in the nomination letter. Exemplary engagement and service are recognized by satisfying at least four (4) criteria identified as 'exemplary'. [See list of activities here](#). GSA engagement and service are balanced against overall achievement impact as is shown in this table.

		High (Exemplary)		
		Medium (Expected)		
		Low (Minimal)		
GSA Engagement & Service	None (Sub-Minimal)			
Overall Achievement Impact				

Legend:

- Fellowship unlikely to be granted (Red)
- Fellowship granted in rare instances (Yellow)
- Fellowship likely to be granted (Green)

If the nominee has a very high level of engagement and service to GSA, consider nominating for the Professional Organizations Nomination Category.

NOTE: Inadequate documentation of GSA engagement and service is one of the most common reasons that nominations are not approved. Successful nominations portray both the sustained and distinguished aspects of the nominee's engagement, in specific and quantitative terms—for example, how many publications in GSA journals, role(s) and length of service on a committee (see worksheet below). Nominators are encouraged to request assistance from the nominee in documenting GSA involvement. The worksheet below might be of assistance.

Contributions to GSA Dimensions			
<i>This worksheet is designed as an aid for the nominators to specify and quantify a nominee's engagement with and service to GSA. This information is to be summarized in the nomination letter. (This worksheet should not be submitted as part of the nomination.)</i>			
<i>Criterion</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Exemplary</i>	<i>Key Aspects</i>
GSA Meeting Attendance	at least once in previous 5 years	--	How many meetings? Years of attendance? Degree of participation (sponsoring students, supporting lead authors, etc.)?
GSA Meeting Presentation	at least once in previous 5 years	--	How many presentations (talks, posters, other)? How many as the first author? How many contributions are through others, who made the presentation?
Publishing in GSA Journals	1	>5	<i>Covered in detail in CV/resume, but a concise summary in the nomination letter is quite helpful.</i> How many as first author? How many as contributing through co-authors?
Service on GSA Editorial Boards	at least one term		Specify role on editorial board and length of service.
Manuscript Reviews for GSA Journals	>5		How many reviews? How many different GSA journals? Over what time span?
GSA Field Trip Leader	1 trip	2+	Locations of trip? Length of trip? Number of participants? Participant demographics/target audience?
GSA Short Course Instructor	1 short course	2+	How many different short courses? How many sessions of each? Length of short course? Participant demographics/target audience/needs served?
GSA Committee Service	1 term	1 term	Role(s) on committee? Length of service? Significant outcomes of service?
GSA scientific Division Leadership	1 term	1 term	Role(s) in Division(s)? Length of service? Significant outcomes of service?
GSA geographic Section Leadership	1 term	1 term	Role(s) in Section(s)? Length of service? Significant outcomes of service?
GSA Mentorship	1 event, panel or program	1 event, panel or program	Number of 'mentees'? Length of service? Mentee demographics/target groups/needs served? Significant outcomes?

Tips

Online Form:

Please note that the online form will not allow you to save and return to complete later. Before starting the online nomination form have the following ready:

- Selected Nomination Category(ies)
- 50 word reason for nomination
- Nomination letter (endorsed by at least 2 but up to 3 GSA members)
- A 2-page C.V. or resume
- Bibliography, if applicable

If you are unable to find your nominee or supporting nominators in the nomination form, please do the following:

1. Try searching using only the first few letters of the person's last name.
2. If the person you are searching for has an apostrophe in their name, for example O'Connell, try removing the apostrophe. You may also want to search using the person's first name and first letter(s) of last name.
3. If you are unable to find a member, please contact Samira Rosario Martinez, srmartinez@geosociety.org, for assistance.

Supporting Nominators:

View a list of current [GSA Fellows here](#).

View members in good standing via the [online Directory](#): You must be signed in to the GSA Member Community to access.

1. Go to www.geosociety.org
2. Sign in (button at top right)
3. Select "Community" from the menu in the top bar
4. Select "Directory" from the menu bar and either search by name (Basic Search) or by Professional Interest or Member Type (Advanced Search)