

## XXIX. AURA AWARDS

### A. POLICY

AURA recognizes and encourages outstanding contributions to science and to service to the astronomy community. AURA fosters such contributions through the "AURA Outstanding Achievement Award Program." AURA currently recognizes five award categories: Science; Service; Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; Technology and Innovation; and Team.

### B. PROCEDURE FOR INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Each Center Director, Program Director, or AURA Division Head may nominate annually one or two AURA staff members or a team for each award. Nominations shall be submitted to the President, who will make the selection.

The President (or his or her designee) shall present the awards. Each awardee shall receive a certificate stating the award. For all awards except the Team Award, each award comes with a bonus of \$1,500, taxable to awardee(s) as income), and to be divided among awardees in the case of a joint or group award. For the Team Award, AURA recognizes excellence in a non-monetary award for efforts across Centers, Programs, AURA Divisions, and/or astronomical community lines.

After presentation, AURA will notify the appropriate Management Councils (SOC, STIC, NMOC) as needed, and will ensure that an announcement appears in the relevant newsletters.

#### 1. ELIGIBILITY

All AURA staff members are eligible to receive these awards.

#### 2. CRITERIA

- a. For **Science Awards**, the following criteria apply.
  - i. Demonstrated excellence in science.
  - ii. Focus on scientific achievement during the previous calendar year, combined with a strong record of scientific achievement during the previous three (3) years (as applicable).
  - iii. Observational work, theoretical work, or innovative instrument development shall be honored; the research or instrument for which the award is to be based should make, or have the clear potential to make, a significant effect on astronomy and astrophysics.

- b. For **Service Awards**, the following criteria apply.
- i. Demonstrated excellence in service in any organizational role, including administration.
  - ii. Focus on service contribution during the previous calendar year, either directly or indirectly to astronomy and/or in the support of the mission of the relevant Center, Program, or AURA Division.
  - iii. Performance above and beyond the specifications of the job assigned.
- c. For **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Awards**, the following criteria apply:
- i. Demonstrated commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI).
  - ii. Focus on service contribution during the previous calendar year that involved participating in or leading initiatives that resulted in identifiable change and/or impact, either directly or indirectly. These contributions may be to the astronomy community and/or in the support of AURA's objectives for Diversity, Equity, or Inclusion. For example, activities for this award may include: making a significant effort to promote an environment free from bias and discrimination; organizing, creating and/or facilitating initiatives promoting diversity, civility, and inclusiveness, etc.
  - iii. Performance in the area of DEI above and beyond the specifications of the job assigned.
- d. For **Technology and Innovation Awards**, the following criteria apply:
- i. Demonstrated excellence in an area of technology including but not limited to engineering design, and software development.
  - ii. Significant innovative contribution during the previous calendar year in support of the mission of the Center, Program, or AURA Division.
- e. For **Team Awards**, the following criteria apply:
- Any Center Director, Program Director, or AURA Division Head may nominate a group of individuals for an AURA Team Award. The award may recognize science, service, DEI, technology and innovation, or some combination thereof.
- i. A team will consist of three or more individuals, staff from one or more AURA Centers, Programs, or Divisions and/or collaborating personnel from AURA Member Institutions.
  - ii. A Team Award will recognize sustained, extraordinary performance and achievement by a team of scientists, engineers, staff, managers and administrators in making a contribution to science, service, DEI, or technology and innovation, or some combination thereof. Such achievement may encompass several years of effort.

### 3. SCHEDULE

Center Directors, Program Directors, and AURA Division Heads shall submit nominations for the previous year to the President by January 30 of each year.

The President will review the nominations in February, and the awards will be announced at the annual Member Representatives meeting, or as soon thereafter as possible.

**Policy Title and Number:** XIX. AURA AWARDS

**Name of Policy Owner:** AURA Corporate

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**Policy Approved By:** AURA Board of Directors

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**Description of Revisions:** A new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Award was added.

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