Guidelines for STC Fellow

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Contents

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These guidelines describe the evaluation criteria and requirements used by the STC Fellows Committee to evaluate candidates for STC Fellow.

Definition of Fellow

Fellow is one of the three honorary ranks in the Society. It is the highest rank that the Society can confer upon a member. Becoming an STC Fellow is a lifelong journey of achievement and ethical behavior, an honor bestowed by the Society upon Associate Fellows who have continued to make exemplary contributions to the arts and science of technical communication, and for sustained and significant service to STC. These contributions involve significant achievements that advance the profession and its recognition.

The rank of Fellow is conferred on an individual only once by a two-thirds vote of the STC Board of Directors. That individual is then recognized at the STC Summit following his or her election to that rank. However, if a recommended candidate allows their membership to lapse before they are officially recognized, he or she will not receive the honor.

Fellows retain the honorary rank of Fellow for life. They also retain the membership grade of senior member as long as they remain members of the Society.

The Fellows Committee

The STC president, subject to approval by the Board of Directors, appoints the Fellows Committee Chair. The Committee Chair then recruits up to four additional committee members. All members of the Fellows Committee, including the Committee Chair, must be STC members in good standing and hold the rank of Fellow. The committee recommends candidates to the STC Board of Directors for the rank of Fellow.

The roles, responsibilities, and goals of the Fellows Committee are listed in the Fellows Nominating Committee Charter.

Requirements for the Rank of Fellow

Elevation from the rank of Associate Fellow to Fellow is not an automatic progression. Successful candidates for Fellow must demonstrate career-long accomplishments and ethical behavior in all categories of the application. Continuing excellence since becoming an Associate Fellow in an important factor, as are the depth and breadth of accomplishments over the span of a candidate's career.

To be considered for Fellow, a candidate must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Associate Fellows must hold that rank for at least three program years before they can receive the rank of Fellow. For example, those members who became Associate Fellows in May 2016 cannot apply for Fellow until fall 2018. If qualified, those applicants become Fellows in May 2019, three program years after receiving the rank of Associate Fellow.

- Active in the Technical Communication profession for at least 18 years

- Member of the Society in good standing for at least 13 years

Recommending Candidates for Fellow

The Fellows Committee will contact eligible Associate Fellows and invite them to apply for Fellow. To be considered for nomination to the rank of Fellow, eligible Associate Fellows must submit to the Fellows Committee a current application for each year they wish to be considered and must use the format provided on www.stc.org.

Before recommending an Associate Fellow as a candidate for Fellow, the Fellows Committee evaluates that Associate Fellow's body of work using the criteria described in the Evaluation Criteria section of these guidelines. The Fellows Committee evaluations are based on the information in the detailed application provided by eligible Associate Fellows, personal references, and other research. In their deliberations, committee members weigh and consider each candidate's career-long accomplishments and ethical behavior in all categories of the application. Continuing excellence since becoming an Associate Fellow is an important factor, but it is not the most important factor. The most weight is placed on the accomplishments and ethical behavior over the span of a candidate's career.

For reasons of propriety and potential conflicts of interest, members of the STC Board of Directors may not submit an application for Fellow. Furthermore, members of the Board, the Fellows Committee, and the STC Office staff may not serve as references for applicants for Fellow.

If an application is incomplete, or qualified references are not provided, the chair of the Fellows Committee will contact the submitter and either request revisions or refuse the applicant for that program year.

Evaluation Criteria

The Fellows Committee evaluates candidates using the following criteria:

- **Professional qualifications (academic and work experience) – 25%.**
  Research, teaching, academic degrees, certifications (including CPTC); Career and skill progression, job responsibilities and thought leadership/strategy growth. Technical communication management and advancement within company are positives but not required.

- **Leadership in the Technical Communication profession – 20%.**
  Overall reputation and ethics, recognized as an industry leader who has positively influenced and advanced the Technical Communication profession. This leadership should be profession wide and not limited to STC.

- **Publications and presentations – 20%.**
  Contribution to the field of technical communication not considered in Leadership, such as books, articles, talks, presentations, education/training provided, workshops led, blogs, TCBOK work, and other industry contributions.

- **Honors and awards in Technical Communication – 15%.**
  STC Society-level recognition, competition awards recognizing quality of work, awards from other societies or organizations, recognition by employers or universities, and academic distinctions.

- **STC Society-level service – 10%.**
  Service at the Society level, Society offices held, committees served/chaired, length of service, variety of service. Since local service is part of Associate Fellow, Fellow focuses on Society-level involvement and service.

- **Involvement with other professional organizations – 10%.**
  Type and length of involvement (not just membership; can include assisting at events, bringing together with STC, sharing technical communication knowledge/experience), relevance to the candidate's career or to the field of technical communication and potentially to visibility of STC. Can include serving in leadership for other organizations but not required.

In addition, the Fellows Committee requires references from three individuals who are familiar with the candidate's accomplishments in the field of technical communication. References should be people with whom the candidate has been involved in an ongoing way during his or her professional career; they need not be members of STC.

Exhibit: Reference Request Template

This exhibit provides the reference request template sent by email to each reference. This email is to establish a time for a committee member to talk with the reference and to gather the information summarized in this template, as well as any other information the reference would like to provide.

Dear **<Reference Person's Name>**,

You have been named as a reference for **<candidate's first name & last name>** in his/her Application for STC Fellow. I am a member of the STC Fellows Committee and I am contacting you to set up a time when we can talk and I can collect some additional information from you about **<candidate's first name>**. We would like to discuss the following topics:

- Do you recommend that **<candidate's first name>** be selected as a Fellow of the Society for Technical Communication (STC)?

- How long have you known **<candidate's first name>** and in what regard?

- What would you like to share about **<candidate's first name>** that demonstrates his/her significant contributions to the technical communication profession?

- What would you like to share about **<candidate's first name>** that demonstrates his/her contributions to STC, towards helping others with their respective careers, or both?

- What specific examples can you provide about <candidate's name> that demonstrate his/her leadership and ethical behavior in the face of challenges?

- Being elected Fellow of STC is the highest level of individual honor that can be awarded to an STC member. From your perspective, what accomplishments and qualities distinguish **<candidate's first name>** as deserving the honor of STC Fellow?

- Is there anything else that you would you like to share about **<candidate's first name>**?

So that the committee can complete its work in a timely manner, please reply as soon as possible with several times you would be available to talk for up to 30 minutes. We would like to complete all of our phone discussions by December 1, 20XX.

Thank you for your time, for your support of STC, and for your support of **<candidate's first name>**'s application for STC Fellow.

Sincerely,

<YOUR NAME>
Fellows Committee
Society for Technical Communication