

 The Geological Society	<b>The Geological Society of London</b>  <b>REGULATIONS</b>	Number : R/G/14 Issue : 13 Date : 20/10/25 Page : 1 of 6
	<b>AWARD OF SOCIETY MEDALS AND FUNDS</b>	Approval Authority  COUNCIL

## 1 OBJECTIVE

To define the process for the nomination and award of the Society's Medals and Funds.

## 2 SCOPE

This Regulation covers the procedures for the nomination and consideration of proposals for the award of the Society's Medals and Funds.

## 3 RELATED REGULATIONS

Reference should be made to the following related Regulation: -

Regulation R/G/7: Standing Committees of Council

## 4 PROCEDURES

- 4.1 Fellows and non-fellows may propose nominations for the Society's Medals and Funds including self-nomination. All nominations will be considered by the Awards Committee (Regulation R/G/7).
- 4.2 In order to keep the standard of nominations at the highest level, nominators should have sufficient knowledge of the individual, team or organisation and their work to recommend them for a Society Award.
- 4.3 Guidelines at Annex A and Annex B may be used to help demonstrate the nominee's/nominees' eligibility for an award.
- 4.4 The Society does not confer posthumous Awards with the exception that should the nominee die between the Council meeting where the Award is decided and the subsequent Awards Ceremony then the Award will stand.
- 4.5 Council will conduct a ballot to decide which candidates should receive the appropriate Medal or Fund. In the event of a tied vote, the President shall have the casting vote.
- 4.6 This Regulation does not apply to the President's Awards, which are determined solely by the President.
- 4.7 The Awards are ideally conferred at a ceremony held at the same venue and on the same day as the Annual General Meeting.

## SOCIETY AWARDS DESCRIPTIONS

All medals, awards and funds are usually awarded annually by Council (or by the President in the case of the President's Awards) though no award will be made for a specific medal, award or fund if no individual, team or organisation with sufficient achievements is proposed that year or as Council determines.

### I. CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

#### Wollaston Medal

The Wollaston Medal is the highest award of the Geological Society. This medal is given to geoscientists who have had a significant influence by means of a substantial body of excellent research in either or both 'pure' and 'applied' aspects of the science. It was established by William Hyde Wollaston (1766-1828), an eminent figure in British science credited with discoveries across the natural sciences, to promote '*researches concerning the mineral structure of the Earth*' ... '*or of the science of Geology in general*' and to enable the Council of the Geological Society to reward '*the researches of any individual or individuals, of any country, saving only that no member of the Council ... shall be entitled to receive or partake of such aid or reward*'. The first recipient of the Wollaston Medal was William Smith in 1831. The Wollaston medal will be awarded annually or at such other intervals as Council may determine.

#### Lyell, Murchison and William Smith Medals

The Society holds these three Medals, considered to be of equal merit, in high regard. They are awarded to geoscientists who have made sustained and excellent contributions to their fields by means of a substantial body of work through their careers in areas of academic, applied or economic geoscience. The **Lyell Medal** is normally given for contributions to 'soft' rock studies and the **Murchison Medal** for 'hard' rock studies. The **William Smith Medal** is awarded for contributions to applied or economic aspects of geoscience.

They are named after distinguished geoscientists who were amongst the founders of our science. The Lyell Medal was established under the will and codicil of Sir Charles Lyell (1797 – 1875), the author of *Principles of Geology*, which popularised the idea of uniformitarianism. The Murchison Medal was established under the will of Sir Roderick Impey Murchison (1792-1871), the Scottish geologist who first described the Silurian and Devonian successions in Britain, among other achievements, in a long and distinguished career. The William Smith Medal is named after the 'Father of English Geology', William Smith (1769-1839), maker of the first geological map of Britain and arguably the pioneer of applied geology.

**Lyell Medal:** Established under the will and codicil of Sir Charles Lyell (1797-1875), the Medal '*to be cast in bronze and to be given annually (or from time to time) as a mark of honorary distinction and as an expression on the part of the governing body of the Society that the Medallist (who may be of any country or either sex) has deserved well of the Science....not less than one third of annual interest (of the fund) to accompany the Medal, the remaining interest to be given in one or more portions at the discretion of the Council, for the encouragement of Geology or of the allied sciences by which they shall consider Geology to have been most materially advanced, either for travelling expenses or for a memoir or paper published, or in progress, and without reference to the sex or nationality of the author, or the language in which any such memoir or paper may be written. There is further provision for suspending the award for one year, and in such case for awarding a medal to each of two persons who have been jointly engaged in some exploration in the same country, or perhaps on allied subjects in different countries, the proportion of interest always not being less to each Medal than one third of the annual interest*'.

**Murchison Medal:** Established under the will of Sir Roderick Impey Murchison (1792-1871) '*to be applied in every consecutive year, in such manner as the Council of the Society may deem most useful in advancing Geological Science, whether by granting sums of money to travellers in pursuit of knowledge, to authors of memoirs, or to persons actually employed in any enquiries bearing upon the science of Geology, or in rewarding any such travellers, authors, or any other persons, and the Medal to be given to some*

*person to whom such Council shall grant any sum of money or recompense in respect of Geological Science'.*

**William Smith Medal:** Candidates must have made significant contributions, which will normally be published papers and verifiable achievements in the application of geoscience, although in view of the confidential nature of the work in the case of some candidates, other criteria may be used as the basis of the award. The Engineering Group had been considering establishing its own William Smith essay prize in the early 1970s, but fearful that the Society would lose its connection with the 'Father of English Geology' the treasurer Dr Alec James Smith suggested the idea of a new medal in his honour. The move was supported by the Engineering Group and the Society's new President, Sir Peter Kent, who himself gave £1000 to initiate the Medal and Fund. In 1976 industry was approached to help fund the award and the first Medal was awarded the next year.

The monetary indications in the original bequests for these Medals have been superseded and modern custom and practice is that a medal is awarded.

### **Prestwich Medal**

This Medal will be awarded to persons '*who shall have done well for the advancement of the science of geology*'. It was established under the will of Sir Joseph Prestwich (1812-1896); however, the bequest was not payable until after the death of Lady Prestwich in 1899.

Established under the will of Sir Joseph Prestwich (1812-96) '*to apply the accumulated annual proceeds...at the end of every three years, in providing a Gold Medal to the value of Twenty Pounds which, with the remainder of the proceeds is to be awarded... to the person or persons ... who shall have done well for the advancement of the Science of Geology; or, from time to time to accumulate the annual proceeds for a period not exceeding six years, and apply the said accumulated annual proceeds to some object of special research bearing on Stratigraphical or Physical Geology, to be carried out by one single individual or by a Committee; or, failing these objects, to accumulate the annual proceeds for either three or six years and devote such proceeds to such special purposes as may be decided*'. The monetary indications in the original bequest have been superseded.

### **Sue Tyler Friedman Medal**

This award is for distinguished contributions to History of Geoscience. Established in 1987 by Gerald Friedman (1921-2011) and the Northeastern Science Foundation of Troy, New York (an organisation he founded), it is dedicated to his wife Sue Tyler Friedman in acknowledgement of her contributions to History of Geoscience. The Medal, which is not confined to those with a geoscience background or to Fellows of the Society, will be awarded to an individual of any nationality.

### **Dewey Medal**

This Medal will be awarded to a geologist who has made substantial and significant contributions to geology through sustained field mapping and/or field observation of rocks, and who has a strong record of training, leading and encouraging others to practise and pursue advances in geology by this means.

Established by a donation from Professor John F Dewey FRS and first awarded in 2018.

## II. SERVICE AND/OR OUTREACH AWARDS

### Major John Sacheverell A'Deane Coke and Major Edward D'Ewes Fitzgerald Coke Medals

These Awards will be made to geoscientists for their contributions to science, as is the case with the Lyell, Murchison and William Smith Medals, *in addition to* significant service to geoscience, for example through administrative, organisational or promotional activities resulting in benefits to the community. The awards may be made to scientists whose training and interests are outside the main fields of geoscience, but whose contributions are of great significance to our science. These two medals are named in honour of Lieutenant Colonel Basil Elmsley Coke's (1884-1970) cousin's two sons, who both died at the Battle of Arnhem in 1944. John Coke was captured by German forces, then shot while attempting to escape, and his brother Edward was killed shortly afterwards while leading part of the British relief force. In 1965, Lieutenant Colonel Coke, who was a Fellow of the Society, established an endowment fund for his daughter with the instruction that after her death the Geological Society was to become the beneficiary, which happened in 1982. This bequest led to the establishment of the two medals.

### Distinguished Service Award

Some of the greatest achievements in the geosciences are made possible by individuals who give distinguished service in a range of activities and disciplines. Established in 1998, this award recognises an individual who has made significant contributions to geoscience and the geoscience community by virtue of their professional, administrative, organisational or promotional activities.

### R H Worth Award

The R H Worth Award is conferred in recognition of achievements in outreach, public engagement and/or education carried out by an individual or an institution. It was established in 1955 under the will of Richard Hansford Worth.

This Award originated in 1955 in a bequest of the late Richard Hansford Worth, of Plymouth, which established a fund to be devoted to the provision, from time to time, *'of a prize or prizes for the encouragement of amateur geological research'*.

## III. MID-CAREER AWARDS

### Bigsby Medal

Founded by John Jeremiah Bigsby (1792-1881), and to be awarded *'as an acknowledgement of eminent services in any department of Geology, irrespective of the receiver's country'*. The recipient of the medal must have done no more than 25 years' full time equivalent research, *'thus probably not too old for further work, and not too young to have done much'* (i.e. 25 years or fewer from terminal degree).

This fund was originally directed at *'studies of American Geology'* but the Award has been traditionally given to geoscientists in a wider range of fields.

### Aberconway Medal

This Medal will be awarded to geoscientists with no more than 25 years' full time equivalent experience to recognise distinction in the practice of applied or economic geoscience. The Aberconway Medal was established by a donation from ECC International Ltd and its chair Charles Melville McLaren (1913-2003), 3rd Baron Aberconway.

## **IV. EARLY CAREER AWARDS**

### **Wollaston, Murchison, Lyell and William Smith Funds**

These Funds are awarded to early career geoscientists who have made excellent contributions to geoscience research and its application, in the UK and internationally. The individual Funds are given for contributions in the fields defined by the Society's Medals of the same name. The Funds are each accompanied by the award of £500.

All applications will be considered in regards of the information provided in their nomination form including the statement as to why the candidate meets the early career stage criteria\*.

\*Criteria Guidance: Nominee is ideally seven years from receipt of their PhD (or no more than nine years from their BSc or MSc) in geoscience or a cognate subject. Other factors will be taken into consideration e.g. career breaks due to personal obligations, the impact of Covid etc.

### **President's Awards**

President's Awards are conferred upon up to two early career geoscientists who show significant early promise and are judged to have potential to be future leaders in their fields. These Awards were instituted in 1980 by Professor Perce Allen and the Awards are made annually at the discretion of the incumbent President. The President's Awards have a value of £250 each.

Criteria Guidance: Nominee is ideally four years from receipt of their PhD (or no more than six years from their BSc or MSc) in geoscience or a cognate subject. Other factors will be taken into consideration e.g. career breaks due to personal obligations, the impact of Covid etc.

**Additional guidelines for all candidates.**

**A. Evidence of impact**

Evidence, either through career progression or tangible professional or academic impact, that the nominee has been and remains technically engaged in the use and development of geoscience and champions the use of geoscience, technical innovation, knowledge transfer, and the promotion of geoscience to wider communities. For example, by creating value individually or through professional or other academic collaborations.

**B. Evidence of personal leadership.**

- Progression of a geoscience career.
- Evidence of personal and scientific leadership, relationship building, team building, innovation, people mentoring, coaching and development, leading and implementing organisational change, knowledge transfer to Early Career geoscientists, contributions to Working Groups/Parties.

**C. Evidence of service to International & National Geoscience Community.**

- Service to professional bodies, e.g. Societies, Conferences, National Peer Review Bodies, Boards and Advisory Groups, Lecture tours.
- Publication record, scientific or technical, or awards gained.
- Service in technical bodies, review panels, editorial boards.
- Support of outreach to educate and engage new generations of Geoscientists and/or raising awareness of geology to the wider public.

**D. Evidence of personal values:**

- Ethics in work and personal life in line with the Nolan Principles Standards in Public Life (*Selflessness; Integrity; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Honesty; and Leadership*).
- Championing diversity, inclusion, and people development.
- Conscious of sustainability and impact, sustainable development goals, and Geoscience for the Future
- Service to community.