



### Why consider an award nomination?

- Awards recognize talent, achievements, and leadership while enhancing a profile of research excellence.
- Recognition through awards can be leveraged for career progression, trainee recruitment, collaborations, leadership positions, and invited presentations, and can contribute to citation metrics and grant funding.
- Awards not only recognize established scholars, but also emerging leaders.
- Research awards can have a positive ripple-effect across campus by building UCalgary's reputation.
- UCalgary is fostering a culture of recognition that is equitable and inclusive of all members of our community. See our [Pilot Plan: Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Research Awards](#) or our [Summary Guide](#).

### What awards should I begin applying to?

- Consider initially applying for internal awards, such as those offered by your department, Faculty, research institute or other offices, such as the [Teaching Awards](#), [Internationalization Achievement Awards](#) and [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Awards](#). The UCalgary Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning has developed a resource library for [preparing a dossier for teaching awards](#).
- Local or provincial awards can create a track-record of recognition, such as with [Avenue Magazine's Calgary's Top 40 under 40 awards](#) and the [City of Calgary – Calgary Awards](#).
- Talk to your mentors, Department Head, Associate Dean (Research) or [Faculty Awards Advisor](#) to learn about "Rising Star" awards within your discipline.
- For more opportunities, please see Research Services' searchable [Prizes and Awards Calendar](#).
- You can sign up to the RSO Prizes and Awards Mailman List by emailing [vprcomms@ucalgary.ca](mailto:vprcomms@ucalgary.ca).

### What are common components of a nomination?

Applying for research awards can be time consuming, but UCalgary has [internal supports available for nominations](#). To begin building a nomination dossier, consider compiling these common components:

1. **Short Citation** – Describe your research contributions in 1-2 sentences in language accessible to non-specialists. *If this is not required for your initial dossier, it can be incorporated in the other nomination components below as a concise beginning or end to a letter or appraisal.*
2. **Nomination letter/Detailed appraisal** – Depending on the award requirements, achievements may be highlighted in a letter or detailed appraisal. This key component of the nomination, articulating the excellence of the candidate, is generally prepared collaboratively by you – the nominee –, the nominator and [Faculty Awards Advisor](#) or [Research Services Office](#).
  - **Recycle material:** for a rough draft, draw on discussions of your track record in your grant applications (e.g., NSERC DG – Most Significant Contributions and Recent Progress, CIHR Project – Summary of Progress, SSHRC IG – Description of Previous and Ongoing Outputs, etc.). You can discuss doctoral or Postdoc work in this section, if recent achievements are from this career stage.
  - **Highlight achievements:** describe how your most noteworthy achievements are contributing to the UCalgary, Canada, and the world more broadly, in terms of the academy, community and industry.
  - **Quality over quantity:** when discussing publications, describe how these outputs have influenced the field and broadly in policy, community, industry etc. Consider such questions as: Is it now a reference work in the field? Are other researchers changing their approaches based on your work? See [UCalgary's resources](#) for understanding and presenting research impact.
  - **Leadership:** provide examples of your strong leadership and advocacy inside academy and the broader community changing the field. Discuss mentorship of trainees as part of this legacy.

3. **Biographical sketch** – 1 page - Summarize your education, distinguished achievements, current professional activities, and honours or awards received.
4. **References** – Compile a list of potential referees who are familiar with your work, but do not pose a conflict of interest, who you could reach out to for letters in support of award nominations. As not all potential referees may be available, developing a list of 5-8 is recommended. *\*References should be influential, well-recognized leaders in the field – Strong reference letters are key to a successful nomination\**
  - Connect with faculty mentors beyond your PhD supervision, to demonstrate independence.
  - Consider references who can address different aspects of your work or career.
  - To support high quality letters, provide referees with any helpful information, including key points to address, requests that they comment on areas most close to their own expertise.
  - *Research Services is available to solicit letters of reference on your/the nominator's behalf.*
5. **Curriculum vitae** – Keep a complete CV up to date with your research contributions and mentorship activities. Put some thought into what sections to summarize or omit depending on page limits (e.g., uninvited conference presentations).
  - Present the most important information on the first and second pages.
  - Present the items under each subcategory in reverse chronological order.
  - At the beginning of the publications section, explain authorship order, choice of venues and method of indicating student/trainee involvement in publications.

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

**Q: Would I be considered an Early-Career Researcher?**

**A:** Definitions of Early-Career Researcher or Emerging Scholar vary across organizations, most commonly being considered as 5-15 years from your first independent academic appointment. Even if you are outside of this time period, if you are new to awards this guidance document can be useful to you.

**Q: How is a research award different from a research grant?**

**A:** Awards are a recognition of meritorious research, whether for a single study or discovery, a body of work, or an entire career; they are retrospective. Research awards are distinct from research grants or incentive prizes which are prospective and aim to generate certain research outcomes.

**Q: What questions does a strong nomination answer?**

**A:** What makes your candidate stand out from their peers?  
What puts them in the top level of accomplishment in their field?  
How have they earned the respect of peers and become a role model in their field?  
What impact did they have on society, and how widely does it reach?  
How have they demonstrated ongoing leadership, initiative, creativity, and dedication?

**Q: What if an award nomination is unsuccessful?**

**A:** Don't lose heart - for many awards, it is common for nominees to go forward several times before being successful. Unless a nomination is time-sensitive due to early-career eligibility, it may be advisable to wait a few years until a record of excellence, including successes in more accessible awards competitions, brings you in closer alignment with the award criteria. *If feedback is not provided by the organization, you may wish to seek feedback from a peer for strengthening the nomination.*

**For more information, please consult the following resources:**

[External Awards opportunities listing - Prizes & Awards calendar](#)

[Faculty award contacts - Call for nominations](#)

[RSO supports - Nominate a scholar for prizes and awards](#)