

Preparing Your Nomination: RSC College of New Scholars, Artists, and Scientists October 29, 2020 Workshop - Q&A Follow-up

Session Recording and Slides:

- See [Additional Information Section](#)

RSC College Nomination Quick Facts:

- Next Nomination Deadline: **December 1, 2020**
- Success Rate of Nominations submitted to the College nationally: **20%**
- Annual Dues for Members: Approximately **\$160**
- The College is eager to accept early-career faculty who show promise; they should not feel that they should wait toward the end of their eligibility window (within 15 years of receiving their PhDs).
- To find a College Member or Fellow, consult RSC's [Member finder](#).
- Additional [FAQs](#) are listed on the RSC website.
- If you hold multiple terminal degrees (MD and PhD), the date you received your most recently obtained degree will be considered the start of your 15-year eligibility window.
- [UofT Divisional Awards Coordinators](#) are experienced at developing RSC College nominations, can offer advice, and may be able to work with your nominator to administer the nomination package, and even review and edit content, based on their availability.

Referee Advice:

- **Two letters of support are required.**
- **An ideal referee is well-known in the candidate's field and can speak to the candidate's impact on the field.**
- **Although the letters are confidential and the candidate should not see the submitted letters, nominators should provide referees with suggested content as well as their CV and bio.**
- **Question:** If your former PhD advisor is a Fellow, should they be a Nominator or a Reference Letter writer?
- **Answer from Professor Lautens:** I have seen former advisors, collaborators and other close contacts be a nominator or referee. I tended to give a little less weight if they were a reference, but other members had a different attitude. It is hard to give very firm advice since each member ranks in their own way. I aimed to have balance of regions, gender, fields but others clearly did not follow the same strategy. Put your best package together with the best people you can get and highlight anything out of the ordinary that helps your application stand out. The College wants more non-traditional members and that includes people who work in Museums etc. as members. Each committee member makes a ranked list and so if one

person ranks you down it is hard to overcome. You need universal appeal to people outside your field so write your application with that in mind.

- **Answer from RSC:** Selection Committees like to see referees have some distance from the candidate (i.e., not their Ph.D. advisor ideally), as this demonstrates the impact/reach of the candidate's research.

Nominator Advice:

- **It is vital that the candidate draft the nominator letter.**
- **Nominators *must* be current Fellows or College Members; UofT will not lead “institutional nominations.”**
- **Question:** What should I consider when I choose a nominator?
- **Answer from Professor Lautens:** The choice of the nominator is *much* less significant than the referees, since they don't provide their own reviews of the candidate or their research. Rather, they introduce and frame the nomination and if willing, facilitate the submission of the nomination itself. The facilitation and submission of a nomination sometimes falls to a divisional awards coordinator. While the reputation or seniority of a nominator is less important than their capacity to facilitate and submit your nomination by the deadline, nominators sometimes can get more distinguished referees to write letters.
- **Question:** What if I don't personally know any of the eligible nominators?
- **Answer from Professor Lautens:** If you don't know any relevant potential nominators directly, reach out to your chair, a senior colleague in the department, or even someone at another institution who might have offered to help you, [in order to broker an introduction with a nominator or offer further advice on how to proceed.]

Candidate's Statement/Impact Advice:

- **Question:** What types of outreach activities should I be highlighting?
- **Answer from Professor Lautens:** Any outreach is good but specific, sustained and significant matters most. It is even better if the candidate initiated the outreach, and better still if it has had impact that is demonstratable. Outreach that serves underrepresented groups carries weight as does engagement with the public and youth.
- **Question:** If my work is situated outside Canada, will that be considered with equal importance?
- **Answer from Professor Lautens:** I think the College wants to see its members raise the profile of the RSC and help outreach in any capacity. If you are doing outreach in Africa, Southern Hemisphere etc that will carry weight.