

Assessment Guide - Conflicts of Interest

It is paramount the process for evaluation of award nominations be transparent. This protects the reputations of everyone involved in the process, including evaluators, donors, awardees and the Academy.

All award committee members will abide by the [ATSE Code of Conduct](#) and abide by the [ATSE Values](#).

An actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest occurs when an individual's personal interests may conflict with their responsibility to act in the best interests of the organisation.

Personal interests include direct interests, as well as those of family, friends, or other organisation a person may be involved with or have an interest in (for example, as a shareholder).

They also include an actual or perceived conflict between an individual's duty to ATSE and a fair and transparent award process, and another duty that they have (for example, to another organisation). A conflict of interest may be actual, potential or perceived, and may be financial or non-financial.

These situations present the risk that a person will make a decision based on, or affected by, these influences. Therefore, they must be disclosed, considered and managed accordingly. Conflicts of interest are common, and they do not need to present a problem, as long as they are openly and effectively managed.

To mitigate potential conflicts of interest the following measures and guidelines have been developed:

1. Current members of ATSE's Board or of the Awards Committee are not eligible to be a Proposer, Seconder, Supporter or Referee for the Awards.
2. Committee members should disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest with respect to any nominations to the Fellowship and Awards Specialist at the ATSE Secretariat as soon as practicable. The Fellowship and Awards Specialist will inform other Committee members.
3. For the purposes of assessing nominees, Committee members may be deemed to have a conflict of interest if they have a close personal, professional, or any financial relationship with that candidate. Examples include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Being a direct supervisor of, or being directly supervised by, the nominee
 - b. Being a close family member (to the degree of first cousin) of the nominee
 - c. Having a close personal association with a nominee, including enmity
 - d. Within the last five (5) years,
 - i. Having been a collaborator with the nominee on a project or research output
 - ii. Supporting the nominee in a previous nomination

When a conflict of interest is identified and disclosed, the Chair must decide on an appropriate treatment or further action depending on the scope of the conflict. In deciding what approach to take, the Chair will consider whether the conflict needs to be avoided or simply documented, whether the conflict will realistically impair the disclosing person's capacity to impartially participate in decision-making, and alternative options to avoid the conflict.

4. Committee members may be deemed to have an immaterial or mild Conflict of Interest if they have a distant professional or personal relationship. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - a. Having currently or previously been in the same division, department, or section of a large organisation as the nominee (but not in the same team or in a supervisory relationship)
 - b. Having been a collaborator with the nominee on a project or research output more than five (5) years ago
 - c. Having mutual friends with the nominee

The Chair of the Committee shall determine whether a conflict is immaterial or mild. If a conflict is deemed immaterial or mild, the Committee member will not be excluded from discussion and decision regarding that nominee.

5. All conflict of interest declarations will be tabled at the Committee meetings and discussions.