

A Proposal for a Fellows Program of the American Mathematical Society

The Fellows program is created and updated by the Council of the AMS. The program below describes in general terms what a new Fellows program will look like. If approved, some details of the program may be changed by the AMS Council prior to implementation in order to address practical needs. Future Councils can make further changes, keeping in mind the intent of the membership in approving the initial program.

The goals of the Fellows Program are:

- *To create an enlarged class of mathematicians recognized by their peers as distinguished for their contributions to the profession.*
- *To honor not only the extraordinary but also the excellent.*
- *To lift the morale of the profession by providing an honor more accessible than those currently available.*
- *To make mathematicians more competitive for awards, promotion and honors when they are being compared with colleagues from other disciplines.*
- *To support the advancement of more mathematicians in leadership positions in their own institutions and in the broader society.*

I. Program (steady-state)

- A. The Fellows program of the American Mathematical Society recognizes members who have made outstanding contributions to the creation, exposition, advancement, communication, and utilization of mathematics.
- B. The responsibilities of Fellows are:
- To take part in the election of new Fellows,
 - To present a “public face” of excellence in mathematics, and
 - To advise the President and/or the Council on *public matters* when requested.
- C. All AMS members are eligible to be elected Fellows.
- D. The target number of Fellows will be determined by the AMS Council as a percentage of the number of eligible members.¹ The target percentage will be revisited by the Council at least once every ten years and may be increased or decreased in light of the history of the nomination and election process. The intended size of each year’s class of new Fellows should be set with this target size in mind.

¹ This proposal’s recommendation to Council is 5% of eligible members. At present there are about 30,000 eligible members so the number of Fellows would be about 1,500.

- E. Following an election process (see below), individuals are invited to become Fellows. They may decline and they may also resign as Fellows at any time.
- F. Each year all Fellows are invited to a reception at the AMS annual meeting; and the new Fellows are announced at this reception followed by a press release. New Fellows receive a certificate and their names are listed on the AMS web site. The names of new Fellows are also included in the *Notices*.
- G. If they are not already Fellows, the AMS President and Secretary are made Fellows when they take office.

II. Election Process

- A. New Fellows are elected each year after a nomination process. Eligible voters consist of current Fellows who are also members of the Society. Both the election and the nomination process are carried out under the direction of the Secretary with help from the AMS staff. The procedures for nominating AMS Fellows will be available on the AMS website.
- B. The Election Committee will consist of nine members of the AMS who are also Fellows, each serving a three-year term, and with three new members appointed each year. The AMS president, in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Council, nominates the new members of the Election Committee in November of each year. At the same time, the President nominates a continuing member of the Election Committee to serve as Chair. The President's choices are approved by Council at its January meeting.
- C. The Election Committee accepts nominations for Fellows between February 1 and March 31 each year. Nominations are made by members of the AMS. A member can nominate no more than 4 nominees a year.
- D. To be eligible for nomination to Fellowship, an individual must be an AMS member for the year in which he or she is nominated as well as for the prior year.
- E. A nominator must supply a package with the following information on the nominee:
 - 1. A Curriculum Vitae *of no more than five pages*.
 - 2. A citation of fifty words or less explaining the person's accomplishments.
 - 3. A statement of cause of 500 words or less explaining why the individual meets the criteria of Fellowship.
 - 4. The signatures of the nominator and three additional AMS members who support the nomination, with at least two of these individuals current Fellows.
- F. Any person who appears on the ballot and is not elected a Fellow will remain an active nominee to be considered by the Election Committee for inclusion on the ballot for a further 2 years.
- G. A person can be nominated no more than 3 times in a 5-year period.
- H. Each year the January Council provides a guideline for the number of nominations to appear on the ballot. The Election Committee assembles the ballot from the nominations bearing in mind this guideline, diversity of every kind, and the quality and quantity of the external nominations. The Election Committee has the

discretion to make nominations itself if necessary to fulfill the general goals of the fellowship.

- I. The ballot is available electronically (only) and voting is conducted throughout the month of September of each year. The Curriculum Vitae and citation for each candidate will be available to all eligible voters. Election is by plurality with the top one-half of the candidates elected. In case of a tie, more than one-half of the candidates may be elected.
- J. Those nominees elected are invited by the President to become new Fellows of the AMS as of January 1 of the following year.

III. Initial Implementation

- A. In the initial year of the program, all eligible AMS members who have done one or more of the following are invited to become AMS Fellows.²
 1. Given an invited AMS address (including at joint meetings).
 2. Been awarded an AMS research prize.³
 3. Given an invited address at an International Congress of Mathematicians (ICM) or an International Congress of Industrial and Applied Mathematicians (ICIAM).⁴
- B. An additional 50 Fellows are selected by a committee appointed by the President with the advice of the Executive Committee of the Council. Particular attention will be paid to selecting AMS members recognized for their contributions to education and service to the profession.
- C. For the initial "seed pool" of Fellows there is no length of AMS membership required. Any person who falls into one of the three categories above, and who is an AMS member during the year in which this program is initiated will be invited to be a Fellow.
- D. At least ten (10), but no more than fifty (50), new Fellows are elected each year until the total number of Fellows reaches 95% of the targeted size of the Fellowship.⁵

² The seeding process described in III.A would produce offers of Fellows status to more than 800 current AMS members. The group of invited address speakers also includes approximately 400 additional individuals who are not currently AMS members.

³ These are the Birkhoff, Bôcher, Cole, Conant, Doob, Eisenbud, Fulkerson, Moore, Robbins, Satter, Steele, Veblen, Whiteman, and Weiner prizes.

⁴ An invited address is one given at the invitation of the program committee.

⁵ If 1,000 Fellows are named through the initial seeding, then we estimate that a steady state of 1,600 would be achieved in approximately 10-20 years under the proposed plan.