

**ALUMNI AWARDS**  
Policy

## **1. PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to outline the rules and procedures for awarding the Alumni Awards.
- 1.2 The Alumni Awards recognise the achievements of alumni who embodies the University's values, graduate attributes and are champions of social justice and equality in service to society.
- 1.3 The Alumni Awards comprise of two nomination categories and a Special Award category: -
  - a) Alumni Achiever Award: Recognition of alumni (graduates and diplomates) who have made highly significant contributions to their specialist fields.
  - b) Rising Star Award: Recognition of alumni (graduates and diplomates), aged forty years or younger (during the year of the award) who have made significant progress in their career fields in relation to their career stage and who shows promise for even greater future achievements.
  - c) Special Award: Recognition of an alumnus or alumna for his/her contribution to the Alumni Association of University as volunteer, supporter or ambassador or his/her role as a community volunteer helping to uplift communities.

## **2. ALUMNI AWARDS COMMITTEE**

- (a) An Alumni Awards Committee (AAC) will serve as the selection committee and make recommendations to the Alumni Association Executive Committee (AAEC).
- (b) Final approval of the alumni award recipients in any year will be made by the AAEC.
- (c) The AAC is a sub-committee of the AAEC.

### **2.1 Composition**

2.1.1 Membership of the AAC include:

- (a) the Alumni Association President or Vice President, who acts as Chairperson;
- (b) two AAEC elected members (agreed by AAEC elected members);
- (c) a co-opted member of the University staff or external alumni (approved by the Chairperson);
- (d) the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Learning and Teaching;
- (e) the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research, Innovation and Internationalisation;
- (f) the Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Engagement and Transformation;
- (g) the Director: Alumni Relations;

2.1.2 The Secretariat: Alumni Relations Coordinator.

### **2.2 Functions**

The AAC–

2.2.1 considers the nominations for the Alumni Achiever and Rising Star Award categories in accordance with the prescribed criteria and makes recommendations in this regard to the AAEC; and

2.2.2 may propose amendments in respect of the rules and procedures for the award categories, on the understanding that such amendments are subject to the approval of AAEC.

### **2.3 Meetings, meeting procedures and quorum**

- (a) The AAC will meet once per annum, normally between August and September; provided that, if deemed necessary, additional meetings may be convened by the chairperson.
- (b) The AAC determines its own meeting procedures.
- (c) Fifty per cent plus one (1) of the members constitute a quorum at any meeting of the AAC.

## **3. CRITERIA FOR CONFERRING THE DIFFERENT CATEGORIES OF AWARDS**

Nominees eligible for an Alumni Award must have received a degree or diploma from the University or its founding institutions. Alumni can only be nominated by Nelson Mandela University Alumni or academic department representatives.

### **3.1 Criteria for the Alumni Achiever Award**

- 3.1.1 Nominees must have an excellent professional track record (which may include areas of excellence in sport, arts and culture, public service, etc.) and have achieved recognition by peers, industry, professional bodies, etc.
- 3.1.2 Nominees must have made significant impact within their professional field and/or in society:
  - (a) His/her respective leadership roles, areas of impact and influence must be clearly defined and motivated.
  - (b) His/her demonstrated commitment, vision, and potential for leadership and/or innovation must be evident.
  - (c) His/her achievements must be stated clearly and in the case of successful organisations, his/her contribution towards the achievements of the organisation must be evident.
- 3.1.3 Nominees must be of good character to serve as University ambassadors and role models and exemplify the institutional values i.e. ubuntu, integrity, responsibility, diversity, respect for the natural environment and excellence.
- 3.1.4 Evidence must be provided of having rendered service of excellence or distinction in the wider society and the period of such service.

### **3.2 Criteria for the Alumni Rising Star Award**

- 3.2.1 Nominees must have an excellent professional track record (which may include areas of excellence in sport, arts and culture, public service, etc.) and have achieved recognition by peers, industry, professional bodies, etc. considering their age and career stage.
- 3.2.2 Nominees must have made significant impact within their professional field and/or in society considering their career stage.
  - (a) Progress and impact within their professional field must be indicative of an upward trajectory.
  - (b) Role and impact of the individual within an organisational or group context must be clearly stated.
- 3.2.3 Nominees must be of good character to serve as University ambassadors and role models and exemplify the institutional values i.e. ubuntu, integrity, responsibility, diversity, respect for the natural environment and excellence.
- 3.2.4 Evidence to be provided showing commitment to continuous learning and personal growth.
- 3.2.5 Evidence must be provided of service to society.

### **3.4 Process and Criteria for AAEC Alumni Special Awards**

- 3.4.1 The AAEC will annually request its elected members to submit nominations for Special Awards for consideration by the full AAEC at its Special Meeting to consider the annual alumni award recipients.
- 3.4.2 The nomination will be submitted to the Secretary of AAEC a week before the AAEC AA Special meeting.
- 3.4.3 The nomination must not be more than five pages and clearly state the contribution of the alumnus as University volunteer, supporter or ambassador or his/her role as a community volunteer helping to uplift communities.
- 3.4.4 The AAEC must be unanimous in its support for a Special Award.
- 3.4.5 A maximum of TWO Special Awards can be considered in a particular year.
- 3.4.6 The award will be in the form of a certificate conferred at the annual Alumni Awards.

### **4. Nomination rules and process**

- 4.1 A public call for nominations will be made when nominations open via the institutional and alumni digital platforms e.g. website, social media and email communication.
- 4.2 The annual official nomination form for each category must be completed by a nominator and sufficient motivation and evidence submitted for each nomination.
  - 4.2.1 Letters of support must not be longer than two pages. A maximum of two additional letters of support are allowed.
  - 4.2.2 A CV of the nominee of at least two pages and not more than five (5) pages must be submitted along with the nomination form.
  - 4.2.3 Supporting material and forms must not exceed twenty pages in total.
  - 4.2.4 Only electronic nominations will be accepted thus no original and support evidence must be delivered to the ARO (Alumni Relations Office).
  - 4.2.5 Nomination documents will not be returned to the nominators and will be archived for a period before being destroyed.
  - 4.2.6 Nomination forms of previous years resubmitted "as is" will not be accepted.
- 4.3 The nominator and two seconders must be alumni or academic staff of the University or its founding institutions.
- 4.4 University staff members (current and retired) can also be nominators and seconders but cannot be nominees [there are institutional awards for academic and PASS staff].
- 4.5 A nominator cannot nominate more than one person for the same award category in a particular year.
- 4.6 Serving Alumni Association Executive members cannot be nominated for an Award.
- 4.7 Individuals cannot nominate themselves.
- 4.8 Nominations will be open for at least thirty (30) days after the announcement of the call for nominations.

### **5. Selection process**

- 5.1 Nominations for the Alumni Achiever and Rising Star categories, received by the ARO before or on the annual due date, will be considered by the AAC.
- 5.2 Nominators will receive an acknowledgement of nomination within 48 hours.
- 5.3 A nomination include the prescribed nomination form and relevant support material.
- 5.4 The submission of a nomination by a nominator is subject to the selection process and it should be evident that there is no guarantee that an award will be made.
- 5.5 The annual AAC award recipient recommendations will be submitted to the AAEC for final approval.
- 5.6 A maximum of **FIVE (5)** Alumni Achiever awards will be made in a particular year.
- 5.7 A maximum of **FIVE (5)** Rising Star awards will be made in a particular year.
- 5.8 If no nominations meet the criteria in a particular category, no award will be made.
- 5.9 The AAEC approved list of award recipients is final and cannot be taken under review.

- 5.10 The selection process should be completed within thirty (30) days of the closing date for nominations.
- 5.11 Successful nominees should be informed of the award at least thirty (30) days before the actual award event.

## **6. Confidentiality**

6.1 The utmost confidentiality must be maintained in all matters pertaining to Alumni Award recipients, with a view to ensuring such confidentiality –

- 6.1.1 The proposers and relevant internal constituencies should be made aware of the importance of confidentiality during the process; and
- 6.1.2 Discussions of the AAC and AAEC in the meetings concerned should be held in committee if necessary;
- 6.1.3 The names of the successful candidates must be kept strictly confidential until such time as they have denoted their acceptance of the Alumni Award;
- 6.1.4 AAC and AAEC members must agree to confidentiality where Alumni Award nominations are discussed.

## **7. Nature of the Awards**

- 7.1 The award will take the form of a framed certificate, differentiated for each category.
- 7.2 The award function format will be determined by the AAEC.

## **8. Revoking an Award**

The AAEC can consider revoking an award by application or by its own consideration if the conduct of any award recipient has been found to be in contrast to the values of the University and he/she has been found guilty of breaking the laws of the country.

AAEC – May 2021