

The Sustainability Award supported by the Nobel Sustainability Trust Foundation

Guidelines on the selection process of awardees for nominators and reviewers

(January 2024)

Preamble

Sustainability was defined in 1987 by the World Commission on Environment and Development as the economic development activity that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Translated into research and innovation, sustainability covers a wide range from application-open to application-oriented research and the marketability of new technologies and suggests an interdisciplinary approach to all sciences including economics, societal, and environmental sciences.

Sustainability initiatives and programs that impact our societies and change their awareness are worthy of support.

“The Sustainability Awards supported by the Nobel Sustainability Trust Foundation” take this up and build a bridge from scientific research to applied projects as well as international political initiatives aimed at the sustainable development of the economy and society.

A) The Awards

1. The Nobel Sustainability Trust offers annual awards to support the idea of sustainability in science, implementation, and politics. In accordance with the contract between the Nobel Sustainability Trust (NST) and the Technical University of Munich (TUM) of 2022, the two contract partners determine the topics of the “Sustainability Award supported by the Nobel Sustainability Trust Foundation” yearly.
2. The awards, which recognize breakthroughs in science and implementation, are intended to be in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The awards are given to excellent researchers and developers (individuals or groups).
3. The Sustainability Award for Leadership in Implementation will recognize leadership as characterized by a deliberate approach to accelerating the global adoption of sustainability and recognizing individuals or organizations that make an outstanding contribution to implementing close-to-market sustainable solutions or to impulse a new sustainability thinking within the society as a whole.
4. The Sustainability Award for Outstanding Research and Development will recognize the innovative and technological impact of research activities presenting a potential for practical solutions and business opportunities.

B) Eligibility

1. Eligible for the awards are candidates such as individuals, groups, organizations (e.g., NGOs), and enterprises (start-ups, SMEs, or business units of larger companies).
2. Candidates can be nominated by international experts in the field of sustainability.
3. Nominations coming from NST representation offices, TUM professors, and members of the selection committees are eligible. However, nominated candidates must be external to the organizations represented by nominators of the above-mentioned parties.
4. The NST awards should not be given to individuals or organizations – donators and sponsors – that have supported or donated to the NST in the last five years before nomination. Inversely, those individuals or organizations that received an NST award should not donate to the NST in the five years after having received the award. The selection committees should be informed about any donations or sponsoring that occurred in the past or are planned in the near future.
5. Self-nominations, nominations for the recognition of lifetime achievements, and project proposals for funding will not be accepted.
6. Nominators should avoid situations leading to any conflicts of interest and therefore, take into consideration the circumstances listed under E) Final general aspects.

C) The nomination process

1. Nominations must be submitted to the submission email address communicated on the NST homepage using the nomination form provided. Nominations sent to a different email address and/or without using the template will not be accepted.
2. The nominators must consider the selection criteria and quality parameters that are summarized in Addendum 1 and the nominations should reflect them. The nomination proposals should focus on the main characteristics and merits of the nominee's sustainability work.
3. The nominations include a list of the five most important publications and/or patents and a description of transfer into praxis as well as parameters of success.
4. The category and the field the nominee is nominated for, must clearly appear on the front page. Nominees nominated in more than one category cannot be accepted.
5. The abstract is limited to 500 words and summarizes the most important ideas, achievements, inventions, or outcomes and impact of the nominee.
6. The NST, the TUM, and the nomination reviewers should be able to recognize from the first page that the nomination is coming from qualified individual experts, organizations, TUM, or NST representatives.
7. The nominator has to indicate his or her affiliation and sign the nomination. Digital signatures are accepted.
8. Details regarding the front page are given in Addendum 2.

D) The two-phase evaluation and selection process

1. Nominations are reviewed according to the respective award category they have been submitted for.
2. At first, the nominations are screened and checked under formal aspects by the NST and by the project manager at the TUM Institute for Advanced Study (TUM-IAS) responsible for the selection process and all affairs related to the NST Sustainability Award.
3. The project manager at TUM-IAS considers whether the nominators have addressed the above-mentioned criteria (see Addendum 1), the main characteristics and merits of the sustainability work of the nominee, the list of publications and/or patents, the description of transfer into praxis, and parameters of success.
4. At the beginning of the selection process, the TUM-IAS and the NST will examine all the nominations. Nominations that would, from the perspective of TUM and NST, compromise the Sustainability Awards and the reputation of both institutions, will not be considered in the selection process.
5. Only the nominations that fulfil the described criteria are qualified to be reviewed by the members of the Pre-Selection and the TUM Final Selection Committee.

The pre-selection process by international experts

1. The Pre-Selection Committee consists of 10 to 15 international professors, researchers, and entrepreneurs. These highly renowned experts are identified yearly by the NST and TUM depending on the topics of the award.
2. The members of the Pre-Selection Committee will review the nominations related to their field of expertise in the category "Research and Development" and all nominations in the category "Leadership in Implementation".
3. They will be asked to evaluate the nominations according to the selection criteria and quality parameters defined and rank them according to the terms mentioned in Addendum 1. For each award, they will establish a first shortlist comprising the nominations which have been qualified as "very good (B)", "excellent (A/B)" and "outstanding (A)". The individual shortlists of the reviewers will constitute the basis for further discussions within the Pre-Selection Committee.
4. The above-mentioned project manager at TUM-IAS will grant access to the evaluation template for the reviewers. The reviewers will be asked to write down their considerations and assessments of their highest-ranked nominations along the structure of the template. As for the lowest-ranked nominations, reviewers will be asked for general comments.
5. The pre-selection process will be made on the basis of at least one virtual conference and via email exchange. The TUM-IAS will organize virtual conferences, which will be chaired by its director.
6. The decision on a final shortlist for each award will be based on the simple majority. Members of the Pre-Selection Committee will vote, e.g., via hand signals or using the voting function of the videoconference tool.

The votes will be recorded by the TUM-IAS project manager. The pre-selection phase ends when all members of the Pre-Selection Committee agree on the final shortlist for each award. The final shortlists will be forwarded to the TUM Final Selection Committee.

The final selection of awardees by TUM

1. TUM professors from different TUM Schools and institutions, familiar with sustainability-related research and entrepreneurship will support the final selection process. The final selection will take place at TUM under the lead of the director of the TUM-IAS.
2. The members of the TUM Final Selection Committee will receive the shortlist of the Pre-Selection Committee for each award, including a summary of the discussions of the Pre-Selection Committee.
3. The discussions take place at TUM-IAS and are moderated by its director.
4. The Final Selection Committee identifies the award winners under consideration of the selection criteria and quality parameters as summarized in Addendum 1. The decision will be based on a simple majority. The vote will be recorded by the TUM-IAS project manager.
5. The members of the Pre-Selection Committee will be informed about the final decision after the final selection.

E) Final general aspects

1. NST does not interfere in the two-phase selection process.
2. During the selection phase, members of the Pre-Selection and the TUM Final Selection Committee who submitted a nomination are kindly asked not to participate in the discussion and evaluation of their respective nominee(s).
3. To ensure that there is no actual or potential conflict of interest, nominators should not submit nominations if the following circumstances apply:
 - First-degree relationships, marriage, life partnership, and domestic partnership with the nominator/nominee.
 - Personal (financial) interest in the nomination's success or (financial) interest by persons listed above.
 - Interdependent relationship between nominator/nominee, extending six years beyond the conclusion of the relationship.
 - Any other situation that would compromise the ability to unbiasedly evaluate the proposal.
4. Collected personal data regarding the nominators and the nominee will only be processed in the frame of the above-described nomination processes. For this purpose, data submitted in the proposals will be stored by the TUM-IAS and the NST and distributed to the members of the selection committees involved in the evaluation process.

This includes the transfer of applications to international reviewers in third countries, who will be informed that documents must be kept strictly confidential and personal data must be handled in accordance with the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

5. Members of the Pre-Selection and the TUM Final Selection Committee will be asked to treat information related to the selection process, including the nomination proposals, with confidentiality and not to disclose the names of the awardees before any official publication from the NST and TUM.

Addendum 1

Selection criteria and quality parameters:

The following selection criteria and quality parameters should be addressed in the nominations by the nominators. Both selection committees will also take into consideration these parameters for the categorization of the nominations and establishment of the shortlists.

- **Relation** of the nomination to the **Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs)** of the United Nations. The relation must shortly be characterized by the nominators as well as the reviewers.
- **Contribution** of the nominee to research activities, technology development, and implementation.
- **Originality** and **creativity of the concept** compared to international competitors.
- If applicable: the three **most important prizes** of the nominee.
- **Merits of the nominee** in terms of achievements and commitments, leadership personality, and readiness to take risks.

With respect to the category Outstanding Research and Development:

- **Novelty** of the method and the concept in the defined topics with the perspective of business opportunities.
- **Quality** of the nominee's best publications.

With respect to the category Leadership in Implementation:

- **Transfer into praxis** and **parameters of success** indicating the technological innovation power and significant potential of marketability, such as patents, raised venture capital, start or ongoing entrepreneurship, etc.
- **Impact/influence** on economic, political stakeholders and/or decision-makers.
- **Approach to change**, move forward, and implement ideas.

Evaluation terms:

The Pre-Selection Committee establishes its shortlist by categorizing the nominations according to the following terms:

- outstanding (A)
- excellent (A/B)
- very good (B)
- average (B/C)
- below average (C)

Addendum 2

Addendum 2 gives hints to the nominators concerning the front page of the nomination:



NOBEL SUSTAINABILITY
TRUST
A WORLD IN BALANCE

The Sustainability Award 2024

- Nominations for the Sustainability Award 2024 must be submitted to the indicated email address using the provided template.
- The proposal should not be longer than 8 pages (without the front page).
- Handwritten nominations will not be accepted.
- Nominations must be signed by the nominators. Digital signatures are accepted.
- Nominees are encouraged to assist nominators in completing the proposal.
- If needed, the Technical University of Munich or the Nobel Sustainability Trust Foundation can contact the nominators at the beginning of the selection process.
- **Submission deadline: Saturday, April 20th, 2024 (12 p.m./noon CET).**

The front page of the nomination must contain the below-mentioned information:

1. Category of the Nomination

2. Nominee

Title:

Mr./Mrs.:

Name (First name/ Last name):

Date of birth:

Institution/ Organisation/ Company:

Position:

Email:

Telephone number:

Post address:

City:

Zip code:

Country:

3. Nominator

Title:

Mr./Mrs.:

Name (First name/ Last name):

Date of birth:

Institution/ Organisation/ Company:

Position:

Email:

Telephone number:

Post address:

City:

Zip code:

Country: