



Eligibility of Directors and Other Academy Officials for Awards

Purpose

The Academy of Western Artists (the Academy) recognizes that its directors, officers, committee members, volunteers, and other individuals serving the Academy may also be active and accomplished participants in the fields the Academy honors. This policy preserves their eligibility for recognition while protecting the independence, fairness, and credibility of the Academy's awards process.

Eligibility

Service as a director, officer, committee member, volunteer, or other representative of the Academy does not, by itself, make an individual ineligible to be nominated for or receive an Academy award. All nominees, including individuals affiliated with the Academy, must satisfy the same published eligibility requirements and will be evaluated according to the same standards applicable to all other nominees.

Independent Judging

Award recipients will be selected through the Academy's established judging process. Judges will exercise independent judgment and will not be directed or influenced by the Board of Directors, Academy officers, staff, award nominees, or other interested parties. No director, officer, committee member, volunteer, or other Academy representative who is nominated for an award may:

- Select, appoint, instruct, or remove judges for the applicable award category;
- Communicate with judges concerning their nomination or the merits of any nominee in that category;
- Participate in tabulating, reviewing, certifying, or reporting the results for that category;
- Access confidential judging materials, ballots, scores, deliberations, or results before their authorized release; or
- Participate in any Board or committee discussion or decision that could reasonably affect their eligibility, nomination, evaluation, or selection.

Disclosure and Recusal

Any Academy director, officer, committee member, volunteer, or other representative who becomes a nominee must promptly disclose the nomination to the Board or the individual responsible for administering the awards process.

The nominee must recuse themselves from all Academy deliberations, decisions, and administrative activities specifically related to the award category in which they are nominated. The disclosure and recusal should be reflected in the minutes or other appropriate records of the Academy.

A nominee's ordinary participation in Academy governance may continue when the matter under consideration does not concern the nominee's award, category, eligibility, judging, or the awards process in a way that creates an actual or apparent conflict of interest.

Administration and Oversight

The Academy will use reasonable safeguards to maintain the confidentiality and independence of the judging process. If a question arises concerning a potential conflict of interest or the application of this policy, the disinterested members of the Board will determine the appropriate safeguards or recusal requirements.

The Board may disqualify a nominee or take other appropriate action if it determines that this policy has been violated or that the integrity of the awards process has been compromised.

Public Disclosure

The Academy will disclose on its website that individuals serving the organization remain eligible for awards if they have no role in judging their category and comply with the Academy's disclosure and recusal requirements.

Adopted by the Governing Board of Directors, September 18, 2026. Teresa Burleson, Secretary.