

# ***USSD Awards Committee Charter***

## **Committee Description**

Per the 2018 USSD Bylaws:

“USSD annually honors individuals and organizations through various awards and scholarships. This Committee is responsible for the organization and administration of USSD awards. Nomination procedures for these awards are available on the USSD website.”

The Awards Committee supports the Executive Director, staff and Board by facilitating the annual awards process and promoting the awards. The Awards Committee specifically supports the Educate and Cultivate imperatives by facilitating the process to support student scholarship, encourage participation by younger members, and recognize technical excellence.

## **Terms of Reference**

The Awards Committee is responsible for facilitating the annual awards processes. The annual awards recognize outstanding contributions made to the community of practice. The scholarship and young professional (YP) awards encourage student and younger member participation. The committee directly supports USSD with the following awards:

- Student Scholarship Award
- Lifetime Achievement Award
- Excellence in the Constructed Project Award
- Outstanding Paper Presentation Award
- Outstanding Paper Presentation Award by a YP
- Outstanding Poster Award

The committee indirectly supports awards facilitated by other committees with the following awards:

- Exceptional YP of the Year (YP Committee)
- Public Safety, Security and Emergency Management for Dams Recognition (Public Safety, Security and Emergency Management Committee)
- President’s Award

A description of each award can be found in the responsibilities section below.

## **Responsibilities**

### ***Student Scholarship Award***

Per the 2018 USSD Operations Manual:

“USSD annually awards scholarships to USSD Student Members whose academic program has a potential for developing practical solutions to design and construction problems and other dam and levee related issues. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents enrolled in a program in a university located in the United States or its territories. The award recipient must demonstrate an interest in conducting research on some aspect of dam/levee planning,

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design, construction, operation, or maintenance. The Scholarship Program is administered by the USSD Awards Committee.

The Board of Directors provides the funding and general oversight of the program and makes the final selection of the recipients of the scholarship awards as part of the review of presentations.

The total awards annually budgeted for by the USSD shall be determined at the summer Board meeting by majority vote of the Board. The award pool may be supplemented by fundraising activities to increase the available dollar amount. Scholarship awards shall include reimbursement for domestic travel only. Funds for the scholarship program are generated internally within USSD and through contributions from the membership including the annual 5K FUNds Run.

The Executive Director, working with the Awards Committee, sends an announcement of the availability of the scholarship to the head of Civil Engineering Departments at U.S. universities that maintain an undergraduate and graduate program in Civil Engineering. Applications are made through the USSD website and include a brief summary of the student's proposed research along with a resume and an indication of who will be their graduate or faculty advisor. The advisor will also provide a letter of recommendation to support the nomination.

The Awards Committee coordinates review of the applications and selects up to four applicants as finalists in priority order. The Awards Committee is responsible for selection and judging criteria and shall present the criteria to the Board for concurrence. The finalists are then invited to attend the annual conference to participate and present their research either during a poster session or during a separate technical session. The Board then reviews the posters or individual presentations and votes on one winner plus three runners-up ranked in order. The monetary value of each of the awards will be decided each year from an agreed-upon pool of available scholarship award budget and will be based on the final scoring evaluations.

The scholarship recipient proceeds with the research work and is invited to the following USSD annual conference and the research of the winner is published in the USSD bulletin.

A member of the Board of Directors will work with the Awards Committee and the Executive Director to send a letter of commendation to the winner's faculty advisor and to the college or university for a press release."

Per the 2018 *USSD Operations Manual*, the Scholarship program is funded by the following:

"The [Scholarship Investment Account] is funded by the annual 5K scholarship fun run held every year during the conference and also receives donations periodically from individuals and corporate sponsors. Distributions from this account require Board approval.

The Board authorizes the distribution of this Fund annually to be managed in a manner to promote annual growth of the fund, never impacting the principle balance. This, combined with any contributions made to the Scholarship Account in that year, will be the maximum amount authorized as total distribution from the fund in any year, to include both scholarships awarded and travel reimbursed for applicants."

The awards process is as follows:

The Awards Committee performs a completeness check of the applications received and contacts applicants for missing components or clarifications as needed. The Awards

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Committee recruits a panel of judges, typically consisting of at least one professor, one well-rounded consultant, and one government engineer, to review and rank the applications. The selection of the finalists is based on their applications and consideration of the following:

- Research Proposal: Is the problem the applicant is addressing clearly defined? Is the problem of technical, environmental or social importance? Does addressing the problem create a benefit and contribute towards USSD's mission? Is the proposal organized with a clear identification of tasks, research approach, and deliverables?
- Letters of Recommendation
- Publications: Has the applicant's work on this or other topics of a similar nature been published?

The awards committee tallies the results and determines up to four finalists to invite to the conference and present their research. The awards committee notifies the finalists and invites them to the conference. USSD staff coordinate registration, travel and lodging which are paid for by USSD. The finalists present their research during a technical session typically on the first day of technical sessions. The Awards committee provides scorecards for the Board to judges the presentations based on the following:

- Problem Importance - Technical / Environmental / Social Importance
- USSD Relevance - Benefits and contribution to USSD Mission
- Presentation - Speaking skills, clear communication, and quality visuals

The winner and runners up are determined by the Board's scoring, and the distribution of award money is determined by the Awards Committee and emailed to the Board for concurrence. The awards are presented at the conference by the Awards Committee, typically on the following day.

### ***Lifetime Achievement Award***

Per the 2018 USSD Operations Manual:

"USSD honors an individual whose lifetime of dedication and achievement has contributed significantly to the dam and levee engineering profession, through their leadership, inspiration and technical contributions. The recipient of the Award may be any recognized dam/levee engineering professional and does not have to be a USSD member. This award is typically presented at the Annual Conference and Exhibition."

The selection of the recipient is based on the following guidelines:

- Significant contribution to advancing the state of the art of dam technology (can be a sustained, significant effort or a single breakthrough).
- Significant contribution as a key designer, manager, or advocate to major dam project(s).
- Significant advancement of public understanding of, or support for, the role and contribution of dams to benefit society.
- Significant and positive shaping of regulations, policy or standards for dams and dam safety.

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The awards process is as follows:

USSD e-mails the membership prior to the conference to solicit nominations which are submitted via the USSD website. Nominations received via the website are sent to the Awards Committee Chair, and the Awards Committee performs a completeness check. If there are multiple nominations, the Awards Committee recruits approximately five judges consisting of current or past Board members and e-mails the judges the nomination packages for review. If there is one nomination, the nomination is sent to the judges for review to determine if the nomination is worthy of winner. The Awards Committee compiles the judges results and notifies USSD of the winner. No winner is appropriate if there are no qualified applicants. The awards committee notifies the nominator(s) of the winner and assists them with notifying the winner. USSD e-mails the membership and announces the winner prior to the annual conference. The award is presented at the annual conference by the president with assistance from the nominator(s) if requested.

### ***Excellence in the Constructed Project***

Per the 2018 USSD Operations Manual:

“This Award recognizes the significant contributions made to the dam/levee community and to society through the construction, remediation or removal of a dam, levee, or water resources structure. The Award will honor an individual or team of professionals who meet the challenges of the nation's aging infrastructure in an era of limited financial resources and increasing environmental awareness. This award is typically presented at the Annual Conference and Exhibition.”

The selection of the recipient is based on the following criteria:

- Best use of the resource, i.e., sustainable water resource management.
- Innovative design or construction techniques.
- Efficiency/innovation of design, costs, materials or time.
- Overcoming significant challenges; technical, physical or in the coordination process.
- Benefits as a result of the project's construction.

The awards process is as follows:

USSD e-mails the membership prior to the conference to solicit nominations which are submitted via the USSD website. Nominations received via the website are sent to the Awards Committee Chair, and the Awards Committee performs a completeness check. If there are multiple nominations, the Awards Committee recruits approximately five to ten judges consisting of USSD members and non-members familiar with water resources engineering projects to judge the nomination packages. The Committee compiles and e-mails the judges the nomination packages for review. If there is only one nomination, the nomination is sent to judges for review to determine if the nomination is worthy of winner. The Awards Committee compiles the results from the judges and notifies USSD of the winner. No winner is

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appropriate if there are no qualified applicants. The awards committee notifies the nominator(s) and the winner. USSD e-mails the membership and announces the winner prior to the annual conference. The award is presented at the annual conference by the president with assistance from the nominator(s) if requested.

### ***Outstanding Paper Award***

This award recognizes an outstanding paper presented during each USSD Conference and Exhibition. The selection of the recipient is based on topic relevance, delivery of information, and presentation at the conference. Only papers submitted on time are eligible for the award.

The awards process is as follows:

**Paper Review:** The moderators and co-moderators for each of the technical sessions complete the initial ranking based on paper content; topic relevance; writing quality; and supporting exhibits. The scoring is performed with USSD's online system used for paper review and is coordinated by USSD staff. USSD sends the moderators scoring results to the Awards Committee for review. The committee determines the top five papers for further consideration based on their presentation at the conference.

**Presentation Review:** The Awards Committee recruits a diverse panel of at least five judges to attend and rank each presentation. During the conference, the presentations are judged on technical content; topic relevance to the USSD community; presentation style and how engaging the presentation was.; presentation materials quantity; and whether the presenter allowed time for questions. The Awards Committee tallies the results of the judging at the conference and determines the winner. The Awards Committee announces the winner at the conference, typically during the closing party.

### ***Outstanding Paper Award by a Young Professional***

This award recognizes an outstanding paper presented by a YP during each USSD Conference and Exhibition. The purpose of this award is to highlight the potential of promising younger members and encourage mentoring of and collaboration with younger members. To qualify for the award, the young professional (age 35 years or younger as of the conference) must be an author or co-author of a paper accepted for the annual conference, submitted on time, and must participate in the presentation of the paper at the conference. The young professional is not required to present the entire paper. USSD reserves the right not to make an annual award if in its opinion there are no papers that meet the award criteria.

The selection criteria and the award process are the same as the Outstanding Paper Award, except the top 5 YP papers are determined by the moderators and judged at the conference. The top YP papers may also be in the running for the Outstanding Paper (non-YP) award. In the event a YP is selected the winner of the Outstanding Paper (non-YP) award, the next ranking YP paper is awarded the Outstanding YP Paper award.

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### ***Outstanding Poster Presentation***

This award recognizes the outstanding poster presentation during a USSD Conference and Exhibition. USSD reserves the right not to make an annual award if in its opinion there are no posters that meet the award criteria.

The winner is determined based on the following criteria:

- Potential value of poster topic to the profession.
- Quality of visual materials.
- How clearly research and conclusions were presented.

The awards process is as follows:

The Awards Committee recruits a diverse panel of judges to review posters at the conference during the poster session and talk with presenters to perform the evaluation. The poster authors do not need to be present; however, posters should be judged accordingly. The judges do not need to speak with each poster author but are encouraged to do so. The Awards Committee tallies the results of the poster judging and determines the winner. The Awards Committee announces the winner at the conference, typically during the closing party.

### ***Exceptional YP of the Year***

This award is facilitated by the YP committee, including announcement and coordination of judging. The Awards committee collects nominations on behalf of the YP committee and distributes to judges to maintain impartiality for the YP committee. USSD reserves the right not to make an annual award if in its opinion there are no qualified candidates that meet the award criteria.

### ***Public Safety, Security and Emergency Management for Dams Recognition***

This award is facilitated by the Public Safety, Security and Emergency Management Committee. The Awards Committee is not typically involved in the process. USSD reserves the right not to make an annual award if in its opinion there are no qualified candidates that meet the award criteria.

### ***President's Award***

Per the 2018 USSD Operations Manual: "The outgoing USSD President selects this award to recognize a member who has provided exceptional service to the Society. This award is presented every two years at the Annual Conference and Exhibition." The Awards Committee is not typically involved in the process.