

## Things to Consider When Writing a Nomination Letter or Reference Letter

*ASHG awards are an opportunity to recognize excellence in the human genetics and genomics field. ASHG is committed to diversity and inclusion in all its forms and encourages nominations of outstanding scientists who represent that breadth of background and experience. Your nomination towards a diverse candidate pool is an important part of embodying ASHG's values and mission to advance human genetics and genomics in science, health, and society through excellence in research, education, and advocacy.*

ASHG award nominations require a nomination letter and at least one (but up to three) reference letters. Each should be no more than 500 words, which is typically an opening paragraph, one to two 'meatier' paragraphs, and a closing.

In order to develop a compelling nomination letter, one should consider the following:

- **Establish your relationship to the candidate**—in what capacity you know/have worked with them. You may mention how long you have known them.
- Communicate **sincerely** and avoid generalities.
- **Illustrate how your nominee meets each of the [award criteria](#)**. Provide examples of how your nominee has demonstrated outstanding candidacy for the award.
- Use specific and concrete examples of accomplishments and impact
- Illustrate the **scale and/or depth of their achievement(s)** and, where appropriate, the achievement's impact.
- Address any **extraordinary circumstances or challenges** the nominee faced; e.g., career interruptions or research limitations that should be considered by the panel.
- Remember that longer doesn't necessarily mean better. When presenting your nominee, keep your explanations clear and to the point while ensuring there is enough information for the Awards Committee to understand your nominee's qualifications.
  - **ASHG enforces a 500-word limit**
- **Proofread your letter**. Check for inaccuracy, grammatical errors, typos, and be aware of potential gender or other bias language.
- **References** (additional letters of support): When seeking additional letters of support, consider **providing different perspectives** – this could mean past colleagues, different working relationships, a focus on different work by the nominee, etcetera. In their structure, they should be similar to the nomination letter.