

# The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters

## Guidelines for the Abel Committee

Last revised Aug. 28, 2015

1. The Abel Prize is an international prize for pioneering scientific efforts in the field of mathematics, including mathematical aspects of information technology, mathematical physics, probability theory, numerical analysis and computational science, statistics and applications of mathematics in other sciences. The main objective of the Abel Prize is to recognize scientific contributions that are of exceptional depth and significance for the field of mathematics. Such work may have resolved fundamental problems, created powerful new techniques, introduced unifying principles or opened up major new fields of research. One of the goals of the prize is to see it awarded over the years to a broad range of different fields in the subject area of mathematics.
2. The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters appoints an Abel Committee. The Abel Committee is composed of five outstanding researchers in the field of mathematics. The chair is normally a member of the Academy and is appointed for a period of four years. The other committee members are appointed on the basis of nominations from the International Mathematical Union (IMU) and the European Mathematical Society (EMS), with two new members appointed each year. In odd-numbered years, one member is appointed on the basis of nominations from the IMU, and one member is appointed on the basis of nominations from EMS; and in even-numbered years, two members are appointed on the basis of nominations from the IMU. Both Norwegian and foreign nationals may be members of the committee, but at least three members must be foreign nationals associated with foreign research institutions. The Abel Committee's members are appointed for a period of two years and can be reappointed one time.
3. The Abel Committee shall:
  - Review the nominations for the Abel Prize. Anyone may nominate candidates for the Abel Prize, including the committee's members. The nominations are confidential and shall not be divulged to the persons who are nominated. It is not acceptable to nominate oneself. Only living persons may be nominated.
  - Propose candidates for the prize in a recommendation to the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters.
4. The Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters chooses the winner of the Abel Prize on the basis of the recommendation from the Abel Committee. The name of the prize winner is announced about two months before the award ceremony.
  - The Abel Prize can be awarded to a single person, or it can be shared by more than one person for closely related fundamental contributions.
  - If a prize winner should pass away before the award ceremony, the prize will be awarded post mortem.
5. A member of the Abel Committee may not be considered as a candidate for the prize as long as he/she is a member of the committee, nor in the subsequent two years. The same applies to close relatives of or close collaborative partners with members of the committee.

6. A member of the IMU or EMS Executive Committees (EC) may not be considered as a candidate for the prize for as long as he/she is a member of that committee, nor in the subsequent two years. The same applies to ex officio members of these committees.
7. The committee members are personally responsible for bringing up possible disqualification. Possible grounds for disqualification include:
  - A committee member has a special personal relationship to one of the nominees (relation, spouse, partner, etc.). If the relationship is more marginal, it shall be discussed with the chair of the committee, and, if necessary, with the committee.
  - A committee member is a main collaborative partner with or a former Ph.D. student of a nominee. Committee members shall call the committee's attention to any joint authorship with a nominee.

If a question of possible disqualification arises, the committee shall discuss how it shall handle the matter and reach agreement. It is important that these decisions be transparent and exclusively based on a scientific assessment. If the committee members disagree about the procedure or about whether or not there should be a disqualification, the chair of the committee shall refer the matter to the President of the Academy. The President will make the final decision on the matter; e.g. that a committee member must temporarily stand down from the committee or be replaced.