

BSG EDI Committee Discussion Document

Awards and Recognition 28/07/2026

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1. Background

As a society, we have been proactive in recognising and acting upon EDI (or JEDI) challenges within our discipline (e.g. Tooth and Viles, 2020). However, some barriers remain, and how we view academic success (Clark et al., 2025) and perhaps, more broadly, how societies and research bodies administer awards and resources (Genua-Olmedo et al., 2025) remains a challenge.

The BSG has a number of annual awards, and the optics of these do not always match our aspirations as a society, or strategic aims with regard to EDI. While some of these awards reflect career-level achievement (e.g. Linton, BSG Fellowship), others are very much focussed at ECRs and the broader membership (e.g. Warwick, Chorley). We should note the following report from the Awards Committee (July 2026)

BSG: Diversity in Award Nominations Report

Research Committee Data and Feedback

Context

Historically BSG awards, and the majority of nominations, have been dominated by white, male recipients and nominees. Recipients of the main BSG medals have been:

Award	Times awarded	Male	Female	Years
Linton	46	42	4	1981-2026
Warwick	40	31	9	1986-2026
Chorley	19	10	9	2007-2026
Frostick	1	1	-	2026-

Note: Not all awards are awarded every year

In 2025/26 the main 2026 awards were again dominated by male nominees:

Award	Number of nominations +	Male	Female	Nominations by Male	Nominations by Female	Awarded (M/F)
Linton	10 ++	10	-	7	4	Male
Warwick	4	3	1	2	2	Male
Chorley	3 ++	2	1	4	-	Male

Frostick	3 ++	2	1	1	3	Male
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+ Where this was a group nomination gender assigned to the lead nominator.

++ One nomination was made twice (one male and one female)

Historical timelines

Whilst the overall imbalances in the gender splits are noticeable for some awards it is important to view this in the context of the historical timeline, because more recently gender differences are less pronounced although the Linton Award is still heavily skewed to male recipients (Figure1).

Discussion Points from Research Committee

- The Awards Committee was aware of these gender splits and discussed this openly in the deliberations. However, it was agreed the primary criteria of quality and excellence was satisfied in making the awards.
- Our discussion after the award evaluation process centred on ways in which to increase the gender diversity of nominations for future rounds (all nominations for the Linton were male). NO quick or immediate fix was obvious.
- For calls put out in 2025 the Awards Officer explicitly requested to consider diversity in the nominations, and a similar approach can be used in 2026.
- One possible way forward is to make a more explicit statement: “The statistical demographic of the discipline is heavily skewed to male genders at all career stages so nominations are particularly welcome for female geomorphologists and these can be made by any BSG member at any career stage”.

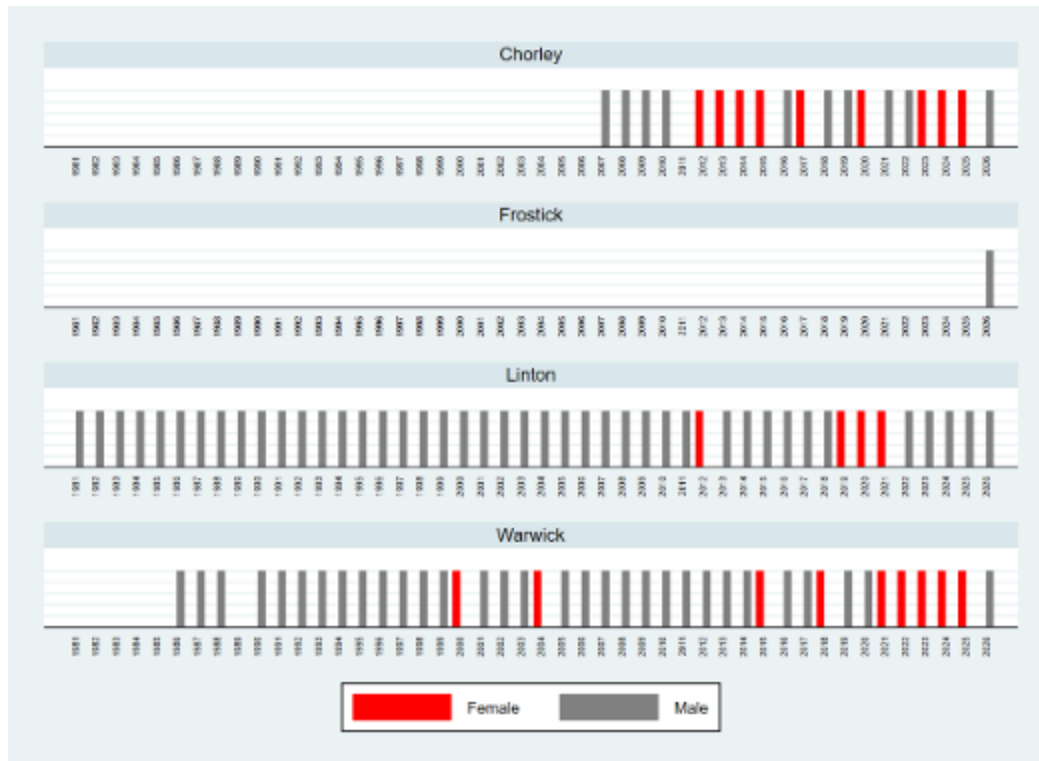


Figure 1. Timelines of the four main BSG (medal) awards showing the gender of recipients.

2. Summary points from these data

1. At the moment the **BSG workflow** for awards and nominations is covered by the attached policy (see below). This policy principally covers our grants portfolio, but a similar approach is used for our Awards, albeit using a sub-panel to manage the assessment process. Essentially, all nominations and proposals for awards are then tabled for discussion and approval at the Research Committee, and then to BSG Exec.
2. **Pipeline and recognition lags exist.** As noted, given the historic gender disparity across the discipline, the domination of late career awards by men is perhaps not surprising. Early Career Awards (by the BSG and EGU) have a quite different profile in the past 10 years.
3. The number of nominations for awards each year to the BSG is typically quite low. Nominations can be carried over, but the **nomination pool** is typically not extensive. This can amplify any underpinning bias in the nomination process.
4. Where we have tried to **increase the number of nominations**, this has not necessarily increased the diversity of those nominations. People who nominate, tend to nominate scientists who have similar backgrounds to themselves.
5. If we look at **recent changes** to the BSG awards portfolio, there has been a conscious move away from traditional "merit" definitions to holistically include contributions from a broader range of contribution types. This is progressive, and we now have the following awards:

- a. The **Lynne Frostic Award** focuses on broader concepts of success and engagement across the discipline.
 - b. The **Fiona Kirkby Award** focuses on those who provide broader contribution(s) to the society journal.
6. Cabezas-Clavijo and Salido-Fernández, (2026) suggest that **awards for scientific merit** named after men, are still likely to be dominated by nominations from men (and awards to men). Thus, the naming of awards after women can help change some of the inherent bias in the awarding process that can exist (Gehmlich, and Krause, 2024).

3. Some Ideas to consider from other Societies

- **Equitable Criteria:** Establishing clear evaluation criteria to ensure a minimum success rate for women and individuals of other gender identities (e.g., non-binary), and a maximum for men.
- **Equitable Evaluation:** Ensuring that evaluation panels (and their makeup) reflect similar equity goals.
- **Proactive measures:** Encouraging nominations and applications from women historically excluded groups and individuals of other gender identities (e.g., non-binary).

4. What BSG does now, and how we might adapt our processes going forward.

As noted above, we do follow some of these principles in our activities as a society. EDI efforts across the BSG in the past 5 years have been very notable. However, these processes might be tweaked further, and below are some aspects of the awards process that we might or might not consider:

1. **Panel balance:** Our existing panel is diverse and representative of a broad range of career stages, so we might look at other options to help: **Proposal - No Change**
2. **Active nomination approaches.** As noted above, we also continue to encourage and solicit more applications and nominations from our membership, and also actively solicit nominations such that we are seen to encourage diversity. **Proposal - No Change in approach, but it's clear that we need more nominations, and as well as being proactive, we might be more explicit in our statement of intent (as noted above)**
3. **Criteria:** We currently use a ranking system to evaluate award nominations, but we might want to develop some simple criteria per award that can be met/not met (i.e. yes/no). These could then be clearly advertised across the membership (e.g. as per the EGU: <https://www.egu.eu/awards-medals/proposal-and-selection-of-candidates/> and <https://www.egu.eu/awards-medals/ralph-alger-bagnold/>). The awards panel would therefore be able to therefore present a range of nominations to Research Committee. **Proposal - Consider updates to our awards criteria, but maintain quality as a key criteria**
4. **Flexibility:** Perhaps consider split awards: In some years, where we have a series of exceptional nominations, we may consider making multiple awards in some categories on the basis of increased diversity and equity. For the fellowship award, there is more

scope for being flexible and pro-active in promoting diversity. **Proposal - Consider flexibility in awards processes for some categories**

5. **Transparency:** In addition to revised criteria, we might perhaps report the number/gender of nominees alongside the outcome(s): **Proposal - Report our data (as we have done here)**
6. **Using our Fellows:** We could get some of the fellows to hold a working group on how we can address this: **Proposal - we could ask our fellows to help us to help devise a long-term strategy to increase nominations and reduce gender imbalance.**



Research Funding Applications: Assessment Criteria and Evaluation Process

BSG Research Grants Assessment Criteria

In evaluating applications for funding, members of the Research Committee employ a set of generic assessment criteria which apply for all of the schemes within the BSG's grants portfolio. These criteria are summarised as follows:

1. All proposals are screened to ensure that (i) they focus on some aspect of geomorphology (i.e., that proposals fall within the remit of the Society); (ii) they match the requirements of each grant scheme as listed on the BSG web site, and; (iii) that the applicant is eligible. All applications should therefore demonstrate how the proposed activities will further the mission of the BSG.
 2. Assuming these hurdles are passed, proposals are graded independently by each member of the Research Committee on a scale from 5 (highest priority for funding) to 1 (flawed). Final grades are assigned based on discussions of the respective scores by the Research Committee (see Evaluation and Post-Award Process, below).
 3. For all funding schemes the primary criterion used is the quality of the science, evaluated based on the case for support and, in the case of postgraduate applications, the associated reference.
 4. For all funding schemes, the secondary criterion used is **value for money**, evaluated by scrutinising proposals to ensure that all requested resources are adequately justified, and (where applicable) by assessing the level of resource currently available to the applicant from other funding sources. In some cases, value may also be added if proposals can demonstrate matched or partial funding from other sources, though the Research Committee recognises that this is not always possible or appropriate. In all cases, where funds are not justified, or where requests are made for inappropriate items, the Research Committee will decide whether to reject the proposal or deduct these items from the maximum award.
5. Specific funding schemes employ additional criteria, as follows:
- A. Full Member Research Grants - Applications should make it clear how the proposed research relates either to ongoing research and/or whether the research will be used to pump-prime other activities, and it is therefore important to outline the intended outcomes of the research. In cases where the proposal indicates that the research is intended to lead to a future grant application (e.g. to NERC), the Research Committee will make an assessment on whether such applications have the potential to be

successful. Note that while it is not a condition that research project grants should lead to future grant applications, this criterion may be used to differentiate between applications that are equal in other respects.

- B. Early Career Researcher Grants – In contrast to Research Grants (see above), all ECR applications must make it clear how the proposed research will be used to prime other activities. In cases where the proposal indicates that the research is intended to lead to a future grant application (e.g. to NERC), the Research Committee will make an assessment on whether such applications have the potential to be successful.
- C. Postgraduate Conference Attendance Grants – Applications must make clear the overall value of attending the meeting for the applicant and the BSG's missions. In general, preference will be given to attendance at significant meetings by postgraduates who are in a position to present substantive research findings. Preference may also be given to applicants who have previously attended a BSG Annual Meeting, and to those that do not hold a funded studentship.

Evaluation and Post-Award Process

The process following submission can be summarised as follows:-

- On the first working day after the deadline, a copy of all complete applications will be forwarded to each of the members of the Research Committee and to the Honorary Secretary.
- Each application is then assessed and graded independently by each member of the Research Committee following the criteria outlined above.
- All applications and their assessments are then considered at the Research Committee meeting that follows each grant round deadline (these meetings are normally held within 3 weeks of each funding deadline). The Research Committee moderates the grades for each proposal, paying particular attention to cases where there is a divergence of assessment comments and grades, and identifying instances where applications do not fully justify the requested resources.
- Assessment comments and grades are then collated, all proposals are ranked, and awards are made accounting for both this ranking and the level of funds available to the Research Committee.
- The Grants Officer (or their representative) sends notification to each applicant of the outcome of their application within 5 weeks of the deadline. The decision of the committee is final and there is no right of appeal. However, applicants do have the opportunity to request feedback. The Chair (or their representative) also notifies the Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer of the amounts awarded and the recipients.
- Successful applicants should then write to the Honorary Treasurer requesting the allocated funds. Note that awards are made to individual applicants and not to their host institution(s).
- On completion of expenditure of the award, and normally within six months of its receipt, the applicant should supply an account of expenditure of the funds awarded. This should

be supported by receipts (copies acceptable in the case of funding shared with another agency). This account should be sent to: BSG Administrative Assistant, School of Geography and the Environment, University of Oxford, South Parks Road, Oxford, OX1 3QY

- On completion of the supported work, and normally within one year of the award, the applicant should supply a report on the outcome of the project. This should not normally exceed 2 pages of A4 in 12 point font, contain high resolution photographs that capture the work undertaken (if appropriate) and should refer to any intended public domain outcomes, e.g. conference presentation, submission of papers to journal, etc. This report should be sent in electronic form to bsg@geomorphology.org.uk.
- Reports will be forwarded with a copy of the initial application to members of the Research Sub-Committee and to the Honorary Secretary. If the reports are approved, then the Honorary Secretary will forward the report to the BSG web officer for publication. If the reports are deemed unsatisfactory, the Vice-Chair of the Research Sub-Committee will write to the award recipient.
- The Report of the Vice-Chair of the Research Sub-Committee to the AGM will include an overview of the success of BSG-sponsored research projects. · All successful applicants are required to (i) acknowledge BSG (Wiley) support where relevant (publications and conferences), (ii) regard Earth Surface Processes and Landforms as the primary outlet for publication of papers and/or special issues, and (iii) claim their awards within the specified time period for that grant, otherwise the BSG reserve the right to withdraw the grant award.