**VLDB Endowment Awards and VLDB Endowment Award Committee**

**Approved by the VLDB Endowment: August 26, 2019**
**with additions on January, 23 2020**

**Role of the Endowment Awards Committee**

The VLDB Endowment Awards Committee is responsible for making decisions on *all VLDB Endowment Awards* given by the VLDB Endowment. As of now, the VLDB endowment awards three major awards: (a) the VLDB Early Career Research Contributions award, (b) VLDB Women in Database Research Award and (c) the VLDB Test of Time Award. The awards committee is also responsible for and encouraged to make recommendations to the VLDB Endowment for creating new awards. Likewise, the VLDB Endowment, at its discretion, may ask the awards committee to create new VLDB awards. *It should be noted that additional endowment awards must be approved exclusively by the VLDB Endowment.*

**Structure of the Endowment Awards Committee**

*The VLDB Awards Committee has five members, who are appointed in a staggered manner, one every year. The term of each member is five years. Therefore, every year there will be one member retiring, and a new one appointed in his/her place. The Chair of the committee changes every year, and the member currently in the 4th year of his/her five-year term is designated to hold this position.* The committee is encouraged to seek advice from other experts in the broader community, as appropriate. A consensus based approach to making decisions is highly recommended. In the unlikely case of an equally split committee, the chair may make the final decision. In case a committee member has a conflict (see "Constraints on the Award Committee Members"), the awards chair will excuse the member from discussions on that specific award in that specific year. The reduced committee will make decisions. Last but not least, if other unanticipated situations arise, the VLDB executive is responsible for making decisions as appropriate to ensure the smooth functioning of the committee.

**Selection of the Endowment Awards Committee**

VLDB Awards Committee members are *selected by the VLDB executive*, keeping in mind the need to create a committee with diversity of expertise and background. A member who has previously served on the awards committee is ineligible for two years after their term ends. VLDB Awards Committee members need not be members of the VLDB endowment. The Chair of the existing award committee will send a non-binding list of candidate new members for the committee (to replace the retiring member) to the VLDB Executive by July 15. *The President of the VLDB Endowment will notify the awards chair of the final selection.*

**Constraints on the Endowment Awards Committee Members**

No award committee members are allowed to nominate or write letters of recommendations on behalf of any candidates during the time they serve on the awards committee. We recognize that it is possible that they may have nominated or written letters for candidates prior to their appointment to the committee. On a case by case basis, the awards chair will decide if the affected awards committee member should participate without constraints, should step aside from deliberations on that specific candidate, or should step aside from deliberations on all candidates for the award. The award committee members are ineligible for any award except the VLDB Test of Time Award.

**Handling of Conflicts of Interest**

1) The awards committee first identifies a shortlist of candidates for each of the awards. At this point, if a committee member has a conflict of interest (CoI) with respect to one of the shortlisted candidates, the member is excluded from all further discussions and decisions on the respective award.
2) If the chair has a CoI with respect to one award, the chair steps down from the role as chair for, but stays a regular member of the committee regarding the awards where there is no CoI. In this case, the committee member who has served the longest on the committee and has no CoI becomes the chair. If the set of non-CoI members for an award drops below 3, the President of the VLDB Endowment will join the awards committee as an additional member for the respective award.
3) Conflicts of interest include co-authorship of research publications (i.e., excluding position papers, workshop reports, etc.) in the last 5 years, same affiliation as of now, student-advisor relationships and close personal relationships.

**Introduction of Additional Candidates by the VLDB Endowment Awards Committee**

While VLDB Endowment Award Committee members can neither submit nominations nor write letters of reference, they should take an active role in encouraging the broader community to nominate qualified candidates. Moreover, members of the awards committee may introduce new candidates during the discussion phase of the awards provided that absolutely no professional or close social relationships exist with the proposed candidates.

**Timeline and the Workflow**

The *Awards Committee chair* is responsible for steering the awards committee through the following stages of the selection process and for ensuring that the following timeline is followed:

1) *Solicitation:* The chair, with help from the other members of the awards committee, will need to post the call for nominations to appropriate forums, including vldb.org. The call must be sent to dbworld and any additional mailing lists and forums thrice - *1ˢᵗ call in middle of April, 2ⁿᵈ call in middle of May, and the last call in early June.*
2) *Additional Solicitation:* In addition, the awards chair and other members of the committee will seek nominations from members of the broader community to

widen the set of nominations. This step must be completed no later than *early April*.

3) *Creation of a Nomination Repository:* The nomination repository should include all past nominations that need to be "rolled over" (made available by the past chair) and any new nominations. This step should be completed no later than *May 15*.

4) *Driving Discussion in the awards committee*: This step is the most important part of chair's responsibility. There are three distinct phases: (i) Initial input from each committee member (ii) Thoughtful discussion, with the help of additional input from appropriate members of the broader community (see below), and (iii) final discussions resulting in a decision. *The final decisions on award winners must be made no later than June 30.*

5) *Notification:* The chair must send notifications to the VLDB Executive and the Program Chair(s) and General Chair(s) of the VLDB Conference, and to the winners. The notification must include appropriate citations for each winner. In addition, the awards chair must send a notification to the nominator of each nomination submitted. The chair should also ensure that the Endowment website is updated to include the winners. *This step should be completed by July 15.*

6) *Roll-over Nominations:* The chair informs the next chair (copying all members of the awards committee) of all nominations that are rolled over to the following year. *This step should be completed by July 15.*

7) *Announcement:* The chair is responsible for announcing the award on dbworld and any additional forums *no later than July 31.*

8) *Review of Articles:* The chair reviews articles written by the award winners for the VLDB Proceedings. *This step should be completed by July 31. (This step needs to be coordinated with the Proceedings Editor.)*

9) *Report out to VLDB Executive:* The chair will send a report to the VLDB executive with details on nominations, including any recommendations for procedural change or introduction of new awards. *This step should be completed by July 31.*

**Cash Awards, Plaques, Papers, and Talks for Major Awards**

The VLDB Early Career Research Contributions Award winner as well as The VLDB Women in Database Research Award winner get each a cash award of $2000. No cash award is attached to the VLDB Test of Time Award. The cash awards are managed by the secretary and treasurer of the VLDB Endowment.

Each award comes with a plaque. The general chair of the conference is responsible for arranging for the plaques. The general chair should consult the awards chair to ensure consistency of plaque design.

Each award winner is invited to give a short talk at the conference. The program chair is responsible to accommodate these talks as part of the technical program. At least one hour must be allocated in the technical program for presentation of the award and the talks.

Each award also entitles the recipient(s) to write an invited article for the VLDB Proceedings to capture the content of their upcoming talk. These papers do not go through a formal review process, but the awards chair is requested to do a quick check prior to do

their inclusion in the proceedings.

The proceedings chair ensures that a brief biography of the award winners and citations for their awards are included in the conference program booklet.

**VLDB Early Career Research Contribution Award**

The annual VLDB Early Career Research Contributions Award recognizes a researcher who has made an impact in the early part of their career (i.e., since receiving their Ph.D.) *through a specific technical contribution of high significance.* The nomination process is detailed below.

**Nomination Criteria**

1. The default eligibility rule is that a candidate should have been awarded his/her Ph.D. **no more than 8 years ago**, as reckoned on **June 15** of the nomination year. However, if a nominee experienced a life event that profoundly impacted the nominee's productivity for a sustained time period (e.g., giving birth), the 8-year limit may be extended appropriately. By default, a **1.5 year** extension is given for childbirth.

   Nominations that do not result in an award are rolled over for a maximum of **two years** and can be updated, as long as the candidate continues to meet the above constraint on the Ph.D. graduation date.

2. The award is given for a *specific technical contribution* and <u>not</u> in recognition of the researcher's accumulated contributions across diverse topics. Further, the technical contribution must have been made <u>after</u> completing the Ph.D. work -- that is, research prior to obtaining the Ph.D. cannot be used towards this award.

**Nomination Content**

1. A nomination statement (500 words or less) should consist of a brief description of the specific contribution made by the candidate and the significance of that contribution. Anyone in the community may submit a nomination. *Self-nominations are not allowed.*
2. The nomination package should include a statement from the advisor (or the department office) confirming the date of graduation of the candidate.
3. The nomination must be supported by three letters of references from people who are not directly connected to the nominee. The letters must address the significance and the candidate's role in the specific research

contribution cited in the nomination. Advisors, advisees, and co-authors of the nominee who collaborated on the specific research contribution cited in the nomination cannot act as references. Ideally, a reference is a well- known member of the community who has not had a close association with the nominee on the specific topic cited in the nomination, but who can still vouch with authority for the candidate's contribution.

4. It is the responsibility of the nominator to ensure that the nomination statement, the statement of graduation date, and the references reach the Awards Committee Chair via email by the submission deadline.

**VLDB Women in Database Research Award**

The database research community is privileged to have excellent women researchers who have made significant impacts on the field. The VLDB Endowment feels that we have a tremendous opportunity to recognize more of our outstanding women researchers through this specially designated award. VLDB values and celebrates the gender diversity of our field.

This award recognizes a woman researcher who has made *significant technical contributions* to the field. *Leadership* in the database research community will be considered a plus.

1. A nomination statement (500 words or less) should consist of a brief description of one or more technical contribution made by the candidate and their significance. In addition, any contribution to the broader database community may be mentioned. Anyone in the community may submit a nomination. Self-nominations are not allowed.
2. The nomination must be supported by three letters of references from people who are not directly connected to the nominee. The letters need to address the significance and the candidate's research contribution as cited in the nomination. Advisors, advisees, and co-authors of the nominee who collaborated on the specific research contribution cited in the nomination cannot act as references. Ideally, a reference is a well- known member of the community who has not had a close association with the nominee, but who can still vouch with authority for the candidate's contribution.
3. Submission procedure (what to submit to whom and by when – see the Early Career Researcher Award).
4. Roll-over and resubmission of unsuccessful nominations – see the Early Career Researcher Award).

**VLDB Test of Time Award**

A paper is selected from the VLDB Conference  from 10 to 12 years earlier that best meets the "test of time." Demonstration papers and invited papers, e.g., papers that accompany

invited talks, are not eligible. In picking a winner, the committee evaluates the impact of the paper. The committee especially values impact of the paper in practice, e.g., in products and services. Impact on the academic community demonstrated through significant follow through research by the community is also valued. There is no formal nomination process for this award, but input from the research community is very welcome and is solicited as detailed earlier.


**Appendix**

*Document Revision History:* Created by Surajit Chaudhuri and Susan Davidson, Aug 2014. Revised May 2015 to include description of VLDB Women in Database Research Award. Revised June 2018 (and approved in March 2019) to include conflict of interest rules, to clarify the 8-year rule for the Early Career Award, to clarify the nature of the Women Award, and to change the name and time window of the 10-Year Test of Time Award. Revised in July 2019.

*History of the Awards Committee:* The working group consisting of Mike Carey, Surajit Chaudhuri, Susan Davison, and Alon Halevy during VLDB 2011 endowment meeting in Seattle. Sunita Sarawagi joined the group at VLDB 2012 endowment meeting. The working group transitioned into the awards committee after VLDB 2012 endowment meeting.

*Previous VLDB Endowment Approvals:* During VLDB 2011 endowment meeting, it was approved that the standing awards committee will administer major VLDB awards beginning VLDB 2013. During the VLDB 2012 endowment meeting, introduction of the VLDB Early Career Research Contributions Award was approved. During the VLDB 2013 endowment meeting, the details of cash rewards were approved. It was also approved that members of the awards committee need not be members of the endowment. During the VLDB 2013-2015 Endowment meetings, the award rules were finalized. The VLDB Women in Database Research Award was established at the 2015 VLDB Endowment meeting, and the cash awards were increased to $2000.