



| [NODIS Library](#) | [Human Resources and Personnel\(3000s\)](#) | [Search](#) |

NASA
Procedural
Requirements

NPR 3451.1
Effective Date: May 07, 1999
Expiration Date: June 07, 2012

COMPLIANCE IS MANDATORY

NASA Awards and Recognition Program (Revalidated May 23, 2007)

Responsible Office: Office of Human Capital Management

Table of Contents

Cover

Preface

- P.1 Purpose
- P.2 Applicability
- P.3 Authority
- P.4 References
- P.5 Cancellation

Chapter 1. Responsibility

Chapter 2. NASA Honor Awards Program

Appendices

Appendix A. NASA Incentive Awards Board (IAB) Membership

Appendix B. Special NASA Awards Programs

Appendix C. Awards Based on Performance

Appendix D. Superior Accomplishment Awards and Other Recognition

Appendix E. Intangible Benefits Application Scale

Appendix F. Tangible Benefits Application Scale

Preface

P.1 Purpose

NASA strives to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Government operations and to stimulate the participation of employees in this effort by utilizing the full authorities in the Federal Government's awards program. This NASA Procedural Requirement (NPR) establishes the responsibilities, procedures, and requirements for the establishment and administration of an awards program that best supports and enhances the Agency's national goals and meets employee recognition needs as detailed in the chapters to this NPR. It provides Agency direction, which should be used in conjunction with the referenced statutory and regulatory requirements. Center Personnel Offices should be consulted for further information and guidance.

P.2 Applicability

This NPR is applicable to NASA Headquarters and NASA Centers, including Component Facilities. Unless otherwise indicated, use of the word Center(s) in the text of this NPR includes NASA Headquarters and any reference to Center Director(s) includes the Assistant Administrator for Institutional and Administration.

P.3 Authority

- a. 5 U.S.C., Part III, Chapters 43, 45, and 53.
- b. 42 U.S.C. 2457, Section 305 of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended.
- c. 42 U.S.C. 2458, Section 306 of the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958, as amended.
- d. 5 CFR, Parts 430, 451, and 531.
- e. Executive Order 11438, dated December 3, 1968.
- f. The NASA Flexibility Act of 2004, P.L. 108-20 as codified in 5 U.S.C. 9813.
- g. 5 U.S.C. 5384.
- h. 5 U.S.C. 4505a, 4506.
- i. 5 U.S.C. 534.405.

P.4 References

- a. NPD 3000.1, "Management of Human Resources."

- b. NPR 3430.1, "NASA Employee Performance Communication System (EPCS)."
- c. 14 CFR 1240.1, Awards for Scientific and Technical Contributions.
- d. 65 CG 738 (1986).

P.5 Cancellation

NPR 3451.1C, dated December 31, 1991.

Revalidated May 23, 2007, original signed by

/s/ Vicki A. Novak
Assistant Administrator for
Human Resources

Distribution:

NODIS

Change History

NPR 3451.1, NASA Awards and Recognition Program

Chg#	Approved	Description/Comments
1	05/23/07	Directive revalidated. Corrections/changes made to correct various directive classification number references and titles.

Chapter 1. Responsibility

1.1 Administrator

The Administrator is responsible for the following:

- 1.1.1. Providing leadership to the NASA awards program to gain maximum benefit for the Government through high levels of performance and productivity from individuals and groups of employees.
- 1.1.2. Appointing the Chair and members of the NASA Incentive Awards Board (IAB) (Appendix A).
- 1.1.3. Approving nominations for NASA honor awards and the external awards program.
- 1.1.4. Approving special NASA-wide awards and recognition programs (Appendix B).
- 1.1.5. Approving performance awards that exceed 10 percent but not more than 20 percent of a General Schedule (GS) and Federal Wage System (FWS) employee's annual rate of basic pay limited to \$10,000. (Appendix C).
- 1.1.6. Approving individual employee cash awards for superior accomplishment (Appendix D) as follows:
 - 1.1.6.1. For SES members, any amount.
 - 1.1.6.2. For GS and FWS employees, when the amount exceeds \$7,500 but not \$10,000.
- 1.1.7. Submitting the following to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for approval by the Director of OPM or by the President:
 - 1.1.7.1. Individual employee superior accomplishment award recommendations over \$10,000.
 - 1.1.7.2. Performance award recommendations over \$10,000 for GS or FWS employees.
 - 1.1.7.3. Recommendations for Presidential Awards.

1.2 Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management

The Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management is responsible for the general policy direction, operations, and evaluation of the NASA awards program and for reviewing requests for new special NASA awards prior to submission to the Administrator.

1.3 Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices

The appropriate Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices are responsible for the general policy, direction, operations, and evaluation of the special awards programs listed in Appendix B.

1.4 Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices and NASA Center Directors

Officials-in-Charge of Headquarters Offices and NASA Center Directors are responsible for the following:

1.4.1. Directing, supporting, implementing, and maintaining awards programs in accordance with this NPR, OPM regulations, and other NASA procedures and guidelines.

1.4.2. Approving and presenting Certificates of Appreciation.

1.4.3. Submitting Certificates of Appreciation for exceptional accomplishments deserving recognition by the Administrator. These are to be submitted to the IAB for the Administrator's signature.

1.5 NASA Incentive Awards Board

The NASA Incentive Awards Board (IAB) is responsible for providing advice and recommendations to the Administrator on broad policy issues and specific award cases in the following areas:

1.5.1. Agencywide honorary recognition.

1.5.2. Nominations for external awards programs.

1.5.3. Cash awards that exceed \$7,500 for superior accomplishments.

The IAB does not review those actions coming under the purview of the Inventions and Contributions Board (see 14 CFR 1240.1, Awards for Scientific and Technical Contributions).

1.6 Supervisors and Managers

Supervisors and managers are responsible for actively participating in and supporting NASA awards programs as follows:

1.6.1. Ensuring that all individuals or groups of employees, regardless of cultural diversity, gender, grade, or occupational area, are promptly considered for recognition when criteria for awards programs are met.

1.6.2. Ensuring that due consideration is given to superior accomplishments and performance awards in qualifying and selecting employees for promotion.

1.6.3. Encouraging subordinate employees to improve productivity, efficiency, economy, and effectiveness of Government operations.

1.6.4. Promptly evaluating, or referring for evaluation, any employee suggestion forwarded to them.

1.6.5. Granting time-off awards without further review or approval for periods not to exceed 1 workday may be authorized by first-line supervisors.

Chapter 2. NASA Honor Awards Program

2.1 Background

2.1.1. NASA's most prestigious honor awards are approved by the Administrator and presented to a number of carefully selected individuals and groups of individuals, both Government and non-Government, who have distinguished themselves by making outstanding contributions to the Agency's mission. Recognition should be extended to deserving candidates from NASA's total workforce. Incumbents of all occupational groups and all grade levels are eligible in accordance with the individual award criteria.

2.1.2. NASA employees and employees of other Federal agencies may be nominated for the Distinguished Service, Outstanding Leadership, Exceptional Achievement, Exceptional Service, Exceptional Scientific Achievement, Exceptional Engineering Achievement, Equal Employment Opportunity, Exceptional Bravery, and Space Flight Medals, and the Group Achievement Awards. Certificates of Appreciation may also be granted. For this purpose, Jet Propulsion Laboratory employees are treated as NASA employees.

2.1.3. Non-Government personnel may be nominated for the Distinguished Public Service, Exceptional Scientific Achievement, Exceptional Engineering Achievement, Public Service, Equal Employment Opportunity, and Exceptional Bravery Medals, and the Public Service Group Achievement or Group Achievement Award, as appropriate.

2.2 Description of NASA Honor Awards

2.2.1. Distinguished Service Medal (DSM) - Is awarded to any person in the Federal service who, by distinguished service, ability, or courage, has personally made a contribution representing substantial progress to the NASA mission in the interest of the United States. The contribution must be so extraordinary that other forms of recognition by NASA would be inadequate. This is the highest honor that NASA confers.

2.2.2. Distinguished Public Service Medal (DPSM) - Is awarded to any individual who is not an employee of the Federal Government or was not a Government employee during the period in which the service was performed. The award is granted only to individuals whose distinguished accomplishments contributed substantially to the NASA mission. The contribution must be so extraordinary that other forms of recognition by NASA would be inadequate. This is the highest honor that NASA confers on a non-Government individual.

2.2.3. Outstanding Leadership Medal (OLM) - Is awarded for notably outstanding leadership that has had a pronounced effect upon the technical or administrative programs of NASA. The leadership award may be given for an act of leadership or for sustained contributions based on an individual's effectiveness as a leader, the productivity of the individual's program, or demonstrated ability to develop the administrative or technical talents of other employees.

2.2.4. Exceptional Achievement Medal (EAM) - Is awarded for a significant, specific accomplishment or contribution clearly characterized by a substantial and significant improvement in operations, efficiency, service, financial savings, science, or technology that contributes to the mission of NASA.

2.2.5. Exceptional Service Medal (ESM) - Is awarded for significant, sustained performance characterized by unusual initiative or creative ability that clearly demonstrates substantial improvements or contributions in engineering, aeronautics, space flight, administration, support, or space-related endeavors that contribute to the mission of NASA.

2.2.6. Exceptional Scientific Achievement Medal (ESAM) - Is awarded for an unusually significant scientific contribution toward achievement of the NASA mission. This award may be given for individual efforts that have resulted in a contribution of fundamental importance in this field or have significantly enhanced understanding of this field.

2.2.6.1. Accomplishments are far above others in quality or excellence--a rare, outstanding, clearly superior achievement.

2.2.6.2. This is a prestigious scientific award for specific/concrete scientific achievement(s).

2.2.6.3. More credit will be given for recent contribution(s) (except in unusual circumstances when a contribution was overlooked at the time it occurred).

2.2.7. Exceptional Engineering Achievement Award (EEAM) - Is awarded for unusually significant engineering contributions toward achievement of the NASA mission. This award may be given for individual efforts or application of engineering principles/methods that have resulted in a contribution of fundamental importance in this field or have significantly enhanced understanding of this field.

2.2.7.1. Accomplishments are far above others in quality, scope, and impact.

2.2.7.2. Accomplishments are explicit, demonstrate results, and are perceived as outstanding or significant by peers and impacted targeted groups.

2.2.7.3. More credit will be given for recent contribution(s) (except in unusual circumstances when a contribution was overlooked at the time it occurred).

2.2.8. Equal Employment Opportunity Medal (EEOM) - Is awarded for outstanding achievement and material contribution to the goals of NASA's Equal Employment Opportunity programs either within Government or within community organizations or groups.

2.2.8.1. Accomplishments are clearly superior in quality, scope, and impact.

2.2.8.2. Accomplishments are explicit, demonstrate results, and are perceived as outstanding or significant by peers and impacted target groups.

2.2.8.3. More credit will be given for recent contribution(s) (except in unusual circumstances when a contribution was overlooked at the time it occurred).

2.2.9. Exceptional Bravery Medal (EBM) - Is awarded for exemplary and courageous handling of an emergency by an individual who, independent of personal danger, has acted to prevent the loss of human life or Government property.

2.2.10. Public Service Medal (PSM) - Is awarded to any individual who was not a Government employee during the period in which the service was performed. The award is granted for exceptional contributions to the mission of NASA.

2.2.11. Space Flight Medal (SFM) - Is awarded to STS flight crewmembers (civil and military astronauts, mission specialists, payload specialists, civilians) to recognize individual participation in a Space Transportation System (STS) flight mission. The medal is granted for participation in initial flight. NASA Space Flight Cluster is awarded for subsequent flight(s).

2.2.12. Group Achievement Award - Is an award given in recognition of an outstanding accomplishment which has been made through the coordination of many individual efforts and has contributed substantially to the accomplishment of the NASA mission. This award may be used to recognize the accomplishments of either a group of Government employees or to a group comprised of both Government and non-Government personnel as a team award.

2.2.12.1. Groups should be identified and nominated at the lowest level possible to ensure, as a minimum, recognition of true working teams and/or homogenous performance.

2.2.12.2. Individuals who have made significant, noteworthy contributions should be included, and those whose contributions or associations are brief, peripheral, or limited should not be included.

2.2.12.3. Groups should have participated in programs or projects that were particularly significant to NASA, not routine events.

2.2.13. Public Service Group Achievement Award - Is an award given to a group of non-Government employees in recognition of an outstanding accomplishment that has contributed substantially to the NASA mission.

2.2.13.1. Groups should be identified and nominated at the lowest level possible to ensure, as a minimum, recognition of true working teams and/or homogeneous performance.

2.2.13.2. Individuals who have made significant, noteworthy contributions should be included, and those whose contributions or associations are brief, peripheral, or limited should not be included.

2.2.13.3. Groups should have participated in programs or projects that were particularly significant to NASA, not routine events.

2.2.14. Certificate of Appreciation - is awarded in recognition of outstanding accomplishment that has contributed substantially to the mission of NASA.

Appendix A: NASA Incentive Awards Board (IAB) Membership

The Chair of this Board is the Associate Deputy Administrator.

The Vice Chair is the Assistant Administrator for Human Capital Management.

Members include the following:

Assistant Administrator for Institutional and Administration

Assistant Administrator for Diversity and Equal Opportunity Programs

General Counsel

Associate Administrator for Space Operations Mission Directorate

Chief Safety and Mission Assurance

Associate Administrator for Aeronautics Mission Directorate

Associate Administrator for Space Science Mission Directorate

Associate Administrator for Exploration Systems Mission Directorate

The Executive Secretary is the Director, Workforce Management and Development Division, Office of Human Capital Management.

Additional members may be appointed on an ad hoc basis at the Chair's discretion to augment the IAB composition.

The IAB may appoint special technical advisors and/or panels comprised of NASA officials or employees to advise in the review of nominations for awards.

Appendix B: Special NASA Awards Programs

AWARD PROGRAM	PURPOSE	APPLICABILITY	RESPONSIBILITY	ADMINISTERED THROUGH	FORM OF RECOGNITION
NASA FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AWARD	Recognizes innovative and effective financial management techniques, procedures, and policies that aid in the improvement of Governmentwide financial management functions.	All NASA Centers, with the exception of HQ Office of Chief Financial Officer employees	Office of the Chief Financial Officer	Annual Call Letter	Cash
NASA PROCUREMENT AWARD PROGRAM	Recognizes outstanding procurement in 8 categories specific performance of individuals and Centers.	All NASA Centers	Office of Procurement	Applicable NASA NPR or Annual Call Letter	Plaque or certificate
NASA MINORITY CONTRACTOR OF THE YEAR	Recognizes 3 categories of outstanding contributions to NASA's achievements of small and disadvantaged business goals (one award in each category).	All NASA Centers	Office of Small Business Programs	Annual Call Letter	NASA Exceptional Achievement Medal
SPACE FLIGHT AWARENESS (SFA) EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION AND RECOGNITION PROGRAM -SFA Honoree Award -SFA Team Award -Silver Snoopy Award	Recognizes significant achievements leading to safe, cost-effective program modifications that increase reliability, efficiency, and performance to ensure mission success and human safety.	All NASA Centers, supporting Government agencies, private industry, and international organizations supporting human space flight programs	Office of Space Operations Mission Directorate	Call Letter (Details are contained in SFA Brochure and are available from SFA Program Manager)	Various awards and motivational materials
AWARD PROGRAM	PURPOSE	APPLICABILITY	RESPONSIBILITY	ADMINISTERED THROUGH	FORM OF RECOGNITION
NASA FLIGHT SAFETY AWARD	Recognizes significant contributions to flight safety for those space programs involving human flight.	All NASA Centers supporting Government agencies, private industry, and international organizations supporting human space flight programs	Office of Safety and Mission Assurance in conjunction with SFA Program Manager, Office of Space Operations Mission Directorate	SFA Program; Call Letter (Details are contained in SFA Brochure and are available from SFA Program Manager)	Trophy

GEORGE M. LOW AWARD - NASA's Quality and Excellence Award	Recognizes NASA's prime and subcontractors for outstanding performance in the categories of large and small business, product, and service organizations.	All NASA Strategic Enterprises and Centers nominate select contractors to be evaluated for the Award	Office of Safety and Mission Assurance	Annual Call Letter	Trophy
CONGRESSIONAL SPACE MEDAL OF HONOR	Authorizes the President to recognize in the name of Congress an astronaut who, in the performance of his/her duties, has distinguished himself/herself by exceptionally meritorious efforts and contributions to the welfare of the Nation and humanity.	Astronauts	Office of Human Resources	As occasion deems appropriate	Congressional Space Medal of Honor
MILITARY AWARDS AND DECORATIONS TO MILITARY PERSONNEL ASSIGNED TO NASA	Recognizes individual military personnel on detail to NASA based on a heroic, meritorious, or extraordinary act, achievement, or service.	All NASA Centers	Office of External Relations, in coordination with the Department of Defense	Applicable NASA NPD	Military awards and decorations
AWARD PROGRAM	PURPOSE	APPLICABILITY	RESPONSIBILITY	ADMINISTERED THROUGH	FORM OF RECOGNITION
NASA EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TROPHY	Recognizes and rewards NASA Center management teams that have achieved positive affirmative action results during the fiscal year.	All NASA Centers	Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity	Applicable NASA NPR	NASA Equal Opportunity Trophy, accompanied by a cash award
AWARDS FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL CONTRIBUTIONS - Inventor of the Year - Software of the Year - Board Awards	Provides monetary recognition for scientific and technical inventions and contributions to NASA that have significant value in the conduct of aeronautical and space activities (applies whether or not patentable).	All NASA Centers	NASA Inventions and Contributions Board	14 CFR 1240.1	Cash
EXTERNAL AWARDS PROGRAM	Recognizes the exemplary accomplishments of NASA employees by participating in recognition programs sponsored by organizations external to NASA.	All NASA Centers	Office of Human Capital Management	Solicitations from external organizations issued through quarterly call letters	Varies by sponsoring organizations

Appendix C: Awards Based on Performance

On an annual basis, in conjunction with the performance appraisal process, NASA recognizes the accomplishments of its employees through lump-sum cash awards and increases to base pay. Summarized below are the types of performance awards that vary according to GS and SES and are detailed in other NASA directives.

PERFORMANCE AWARDS	QUALITY STEP INCREASES	PERFORMANCE AWARDS (SES)
<p><u>Who May Receive</u></p> <p>Individual employee except those in the SES</p>	<p>Individual employee paid under the GS</p>	<p>Individual career SES members</p>
<p><u>Nature of Contribution</u></p> <p>High-level performance of duties and responsibilities of the employee's assigned position, as evidenced by the current rating of record</p>	<p>Sustained performance of high quality significantly above that expected at fully successful level in employee's position</p>	<p>High quality performance during performance appraisal period</p>
<p><u>Requirements That Must Be Met</u></p> <p>Employee was in a GS or FWS position on the last day of the current performance appraisal period</p> <p>Employee's performance has been rated at a level equivalent to fully successful or better for the current performance appraisal period</p>	<p>Recommendation must be supported by a current rating of record of Outstanding (or highest summary level used with written justification demonstrating sustained high performance)</p> <p>Employee has not received a quality increase during the past 52 weeks</p> <p>Employee is not at the top rate for the grade on the pay schedule</p>	<p>Individual must have been in the SES for at least 120 days as of the last day of current performance appraisal period and received a performance rating of not less than Fully Successful</p> <p>Agency Performance Review Board must make recommendation on award</p> <p>Total of salary (including locality pay), bonus, rank award, and retention allowance in a calendar year may not exceed pay rate for Executive Level I; any excess payable at beginning of next calendar year</p>

<p><u>Lump Sum Cash Award</u></p> <p>For GS and FWS, maximum of 10% of basic pay unless Administrator approves up to 20% for unusually outstanding performance; cannot exceed \$10,000 without OPM approval</p> <p>Does not increase basic pay</p>	<p>An additional within-grade increase, approximately 3% of base salary, and a permanent increase in the employee's rate of basic pay</p>	<p>Lump sum cash bonus of between 5% and 20% of base salary</p>
---	---	---

Appendix D: Superior Accomplishment Awards and Other Recognition

In addition to annual performance awards, NASA recognizes its employees with time-off or monetary Superior Accomplishment Awards for a one-time special act or service and for beneficial suggestions. Nonmonetary recognition for career service is also provided as summarized below.

SUPERIOR ACCOMPLISHMENT AWARD FOR SPECIAL ACT OR SERVICE	SUPERIOR ACCOMPLISHMENT AWARD FOR SUGGESTIONS	CAREER SERVICE RECOGNITION
<p><u>Who May Receive</u></p> <p>An individual or group, a former employee, or the estate of a deceased employee, provided the special act or service took place while the person was a Government employee. May be awarded to members of the Armed Forces.</p>	<p>An individual or a group, a former employee, or the estate of a deceased employee, provided the contribution was made while the person was a Government employee; May also be awarded to members of the Armed Forces</p>	<p>NASA recognition for Federal career service is presented to all Civil Service employees.</p>
<p><u>Nature of Contribution</u></p> <p>Performance that has exceeded job requirements as a one-time occurrence; for example, a particular project or assignment that involved overcoming unusual difficulties, performance of assigned duties with special effort or innovation that resulted in significant economic or other highly desirable benefits, creative efforts that made important contributions to science or research or exemplary or courageous handling of an emergency situation related to official employment</p>	<p>An adopted suggestion, whether adopted as submitted or in part, that directly contributes to economy or efficiency or directly increases effectiveness of Government operations</p>	<p>A service emblem is awarded upon completion of 5 years of service. Certificates of service and appropriate emblems are presented for each 5-year interval thereafter. Employees with 40 years or more of service are eligible to receive service emblems and certificates from the Administrator.</p>

<p><u>Requirements That Must Be Met</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Written justification other than employee`s rating of record -Approval at a management level higher than individual who recommended award (including time-off awards exceeding one workday) -Approval by the Administrator for SES employees -Approval by the Administrator for award of \$7,500-\$10,000 for GS/FWS employees 	<p>The suggestion--</p> <p>Is outside the suggester`s job responsibilities or, if within them, so superior that it warrants special recognition; or</p> <p>Has been submitted in writing either before adoption or within a specified time thereafter.</p>	<p>Eligibility for service emblems and certificates is based on total years of Federal service, including all honorable military service.</p>
<p><u>Description</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Cash award from \$25 to \$25,000. The amount is in proportion to the benefits realized by the Government, and/or -Contributions may be recognized by granting time off 	<p>Cash award from \$25 to \$25,000; The amount is in proportion to the benefits realized by the Government as determined by the following Intangible and Tangible Benefits Scales (Appendix E)</p>	<p>Pins and certificates</p>

Appendix E: Intangible Benefits Application Scale

VALUE OF BENEFIT	EXTENT OF APPLICATION			
	LIMITED	EXTENDED	BROAD	GENERAL
	Affects functions, missions or personnel of office or major subdivision of Center or HQ; affects small area of science or technology	Affects functions, missions or personnel of entire Center or all of HQ affects important area of science or technology	Affects functions, missions or personnel of several Centers or has NASA wide impact; affects broad area of science or technology	Affects functions, missions or personnel of several regional areas or commands throughout the Nation or beyond.
	Maximum Award	Maximum Award	Maximum Award	Maximum Award
Moderate. Modification of operating procedure that has value sufficient to meet the minimum standard for cash award; Idea or performance				



<p>Performance contribution of limited value to product, program, or service providing substantial input to success of NASA program, project, or function</p>	\$250	\$385	\$900	\$1,625
<p>Substantial. Important improvement of product, activity, program, or service; Idea or performance contribution</p>	\$385	\$900	\$1,625	\$3,500
<p>High. Highly significant improvement of product, activity, program, or service; Idea or performance input to the success of an important NASA program, project, or function</p>	\$900	\$1,625	\$3,500	\$7,500
<p>Exceptional. Superior improvement of a critical product, activity, program or</p>				

service, level of performance exceptional input to success of major NASA program, project, or function	\$1,625	\$3,500	\$7,500	\$10,00
--	---------	---------	---------	---------



Appendix F: Tangible Benefits Application Scale

Tangible Benefit Award

Up to \$5,000 Up to 10% of Tangible Benefits

\$5,001 to \$100,000 \$500 plus 3% of the excess over \$5,000

\$100,001 or more \$3,350 plus 1% of the excess over \$100,000