Robert E. Yager Foundation Excellence in Teaching Award

Program Summary

The Robert E. Yager Foundation Excellence in Teaching Award will recognize excellence and innovation in the field of science education. This award acknowledges teachers who share Robert Yager's passion for education and continued professional development. This award also honors Robert Yager's effort to make excellent science education accessible to students of the 21st century and beyond. Awardees will have exhibited excellence and innovation in the field of science education, and embody the mission statement of NSTA.

Award

Six awardees will be selected annually. The individual awardees will receive a $1,000 award, up to $1,000 for travel expenses to attend the NSTA National Congress on Science Education, and a plaque. They will be asked to present at the NSTA National Congress on Science Education, with their presentation videotaped for future use. The awards will be presented during a luncheon at the NSTA National Congress on Science Education, held each summer. The corresponding NSTA District Director will personally notify the recipients. An identified Yager Scholar from the six awardees will be given additional support up to $1,500, to present at a future NSTA National Conference on Science Education.

Eligibility

Individuals who apply for this award must be a current K-12 classroom science educator in one of NSTA's districts. In 2015–16, Districts III, V, IX, XI, XV, XVII are eligible. In 2016–17, Districts I, VI, VII, XII, XIII, and XVIII are eligible. In 2017–18, Districts II, IV, VIII, X, XIV, XVI are eligible.

NSTA Districts:
I – CT, MA, RI; II – ME, NH, VT; III – DE, DC, MD; IV – NJ, NY, PA; V – AL, GA, FL, PR, VI; VI – NC, SC, TN; VII – AR, LA, MS; VIII – KY, VA, WV; IX – MN, ND, SD; X – IN, MI, OH; XI – KS, MO, NE; XII – IL, IA, WI; XIII – NM, OK, TX; XIV – AZ, CO, UT; XV – ID, MT, WY; XVI – CA, HI, NV, AS, GU, TPI; XVII – AK, OR, WA; XVIII - Canada

Criteria for Judging

The target audience for the Robert E. Yager Award will be grades K-12 science teachers working in one of NSTA's districts; who exemplify excellence and innovation in the field of science education. From the six honorees, the awards committee will select a Yager Scholar to be invited to present at a future national conference on science education. Among the criteria to be considered by the committee are:

★ exhibited excellence and innovation in the field of science education;
★ effective planning and presentation skills;
★ ability to motivate and challenge students;
★ proficiency in science and science education (e.g., publications, presentations); and
★ participation in professional growth activities, leadership roles, and involvement at professional meetings.
AWARD SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applications should reflect national science education standards and must include the following information:

★ 500-word summary describing how the nominee implements the teaching of science education in the classroom;
★ 250-word abstract highlighting the nominee's methodology and practice of teaching science in the classroom and showing that it exhibits creative, innovative, and sustainable teaching methods that enhance not only the immediate learning process for the student, but also provides the student with a framework of inquiry and practice for all of his or her interactions with the sciences;
★ a narrative, not to exceed five pages, describing the outstanding nature of the nominee’s contributions and including specific examples of the nominee’s outstanding contributions;
★ a vitae (up to three pages), describing science teaching experience, professional development, professional activities, and awards;
★ three letters of support from individuals and groups who are familiar with the applicant’s work. Letters should not exceed two pages each and must accompany packet. Letters sent separately will not be considered. When possible, use letterhead. Make sure letters are signed and dated accordingly. Letters should be written for and refer to the nominee’s strengths and accomplishments, and highlights of his or her teaching methods and experiences that directly connect to the application; and
★ a completed NSTA Awards and Recognitions Checklist.

Upon receipt, all applications become the property of NSTA. Applications will not be returned. Late or faxed applications will not be accepted. All material must be in one e-mail, a single pdf file is preferred. Completed applications must be received by November 30 annually.

Send your original application, supporting materials to awards@nsta.org.
ROBERT E. YAGER FOUNDATION
EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD

NSTA District you teach in

Award Level: □ Elementary (K–5) □ Middle Level (6–8) □ High School (9–12)

Current grade(s) teaching__________

Name____________________________________________________________

School Name __________________________________________________________________________

School Address __________________________________________________________________________

City__________________________________________ State________ Zip________

Telephone (___)__________________ FAX (___)__________________ E-mail ___________________________________

Home Address __________________________________________________________________________

City__________________________________________ State________ Zip________

Home Telephone (___)__________________ FAX (___)__________________ E-mail ___________________________________

School Population__________________ School Type: □ Public □ Private □ DoD □ Urban □ Rural □ Suburban

Have you ever received an NSTA award? ________ If so, list year and award received. ____________________________

How many years have you taught science? _______________________________________________________

Applicant’s Signature___________________________________________________________ Date __________

Nominated by___________________________________________________________ Date __________

Upon receipt, all applications become the property of NSTA. Applications will not be returned. Late or faxed applications will not be accepted. All material must be in one e-mail, a single pdf file is preferred. Completed applications must be received by November 30 annually.

Send your original application, supporting materials to awards@nsta.org.

Questions? Please visit our website at www.nsta.org/awards or e-mail awards@nsta.org.
Robert E. Yager Foundation Excellence in Teaching Award Checklist

Occasionally we receive entries that are incomplete or in which the applicant did not follow the specified guidelines. Entries that do not follow the stated rules for submission are disqualified, regardless of the merit or innovation of the entry. Make sure you and a colleague review the checklist below before sending in your application so you can ensure that your efforts will not be disqualified. Ensure that your application communicates the information you intend. Don't forget to check for correct spelling. All written components should be typed and double spaced, on standard 8-1/2” x 11” white paper, with 1” margins. The font is a standard 12-point size or larger. If you have questions regarding your application, please contact NSTA Awards at 703-312-9217, or e-mail awards@nsta.org.

Complete the list and attach it to your application. Each entry includes:

☐ a completed application form signed by the applicant;
☐ summary;
☐ abstract;
☐ narrative;
☐ curriculum vita; and
☐ three letters of support.

Please be advised that you may apply for more than one award; however, you are eligible to win only one NSTA award per year. Each application must be based on a unique program and process. Submission of the same idea and materials to different NSTA award programs will result in the disqualification of all applications. If your idea or project has received an NSTA award in the past, that idea or project is not eligible to receive an additional award.

If you are selected to receive an award, NSTA must request and receive your social security number to issue a 1099 form to you. If your program is currently grant funded, confirm that you, as an individual, are eligible to receive a cash award. Your application will not be returned and becomes the property of NSTA. If you have received an award for this project from another provider, you must notify NSTA.

If your application is selected to receive an award, NSTA reserves the right to reproduce information/photos/other content in promotional material and on the NSTA website. By submitting material that contain images of students and other individuals, you assume complete responsibility for obtaining appropriate release consent forms and permission to transfer these materials to NSTA.
## Reform Teaching for Yager Awardees vs. Typical Classroom Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reform Teaching for Yager Awardees</th>
<th>Typical Classroom Teaching</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responding to student interests, strengths, experiences, and ideas</td>
<td>Treating all students alike and not as individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging new curriculum structures and using suggestions from students</td>
<td>Following only what is in textbooks, laboratory manuals, or teacher lectures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focusing on student use and understanding of information, ideas, and inquiry processes</td>
<td>Focusing only on student acquisition of information found in classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiding and helping students to be active in exploring and explaining their individual inquiries</td>
<td>Providing information in lectures, textbooks, and teacher demonstrations for students to remember for tests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offering opportunities for discussion and debate among students</td>
<td>Asking students to recite what they are assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing student understanding as a continuing effort involving them in the process</td>
<td>Testing students on factual information from textbooks at the end of units and/or chapters</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sharing responsibilities for learning among all students</td>
<td>Maintaining teacher authority in classrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceiving classrooms as communities where there is cooperation and respect for everyone</td>
<td>Expecting competition among students for learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing teaching and learning by other teachers in the school</td>
<td>Preparing lesson plans with little or no input from students</td>
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**NSTA AWARDS – 2015-16**  
**Yager Award**  
**Official Scoring Guide**

Name: ____________________________  
City/State: ________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completed application with signatures</td>
<td>YES or NO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective planning and presentation skills</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to motivate &amp; challenge students</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency in science and science education (e.g., publications, presentations)</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibits excellence and innovation in the field of science education</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in professional growth activities leadership roles and involvement at professional meetings</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yager Emphasis Matrix (see chart)</td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ENTRY PACKET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500 word summary describes how they implement teaching science in the classroom</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250 word abstract highlighting their methodology and practice of teaching science in the classroom exhibiting creative, innovative, sustainable teaching</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative describing the nature of the nominee’s contributions, not to exceed five pages</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vitae (limit three pages)</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 letters of support (limit 2 pages for each letter)</td>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grand Total**

Comments: ____________________________________________________________________  
______________________________________________________________________________  
______________________________________________________________________________

Judge: ________________________  
Date: ________________________
Yager Emphasis Matrix

Criteria for Identifying K-12 Science Teachers for the Annual Yager Exemplary Teaching Award and Ways of Assessing Real Student Learning

Exemplary Teaching

Understanding and responding to individual student interests, strengths, experiences, and needs
Selecting and adapting curriculum by students and teachers
Focusing on student understandings and use of scientific concepts, ideas, and inquiry processes
Guiding students in active and extended scientific inquiries
Providing opportunities for scientific discussions and debates among students
Continuously assessing student understanding (and involving students in the process)
Sharing responsibility for learning with students
Supporting classroom communities with cooperation, shared responsibilities, and respect
Working with other teachers across the whole curriculum to enhance science and special projects

Exemplary Student Outcomes

Assessing what is most highly valued
Assessing rich and well-structured concepts
Assessing scientific understanding and reasoning
Assessing students to determine what students understand
Assessing achievement and opportunities to learn
Engaging students in ongoing and continuous assessment of their own work as well as that of other students
Involving teachers in evaluating external assessments that are prepared by testing companies