



## AAAS Fellow Revocation Policy

*Adopted by the AAAS Council on September 15, 2018*

**Purpose:** As indicated in the documentation for the AAAS Fellow program<sup>1</sup>, “Election as an AAAS Fellow is an honor and all Fellows are expected to meet the commonly held standards of professional ethics and scientific integrity.” In the rare case where an elected Fellow no longer meets this expectation, or otherwise fails to merit the continued status of Fellow, the following set of guidelines and procedures are to be followed to request revocation and for the consideration of the revocation request to revoke an individual’s Fellow status.

**Scope:** AAAS will, in its sole discretion, consider revoking Fellow<sup>2</sup> status in cases of proven scientific misconduct, serious breaches of professional ethics, or when the Fellow in the view of AAAS otherwise no longer merits the status of Fellow. All requests to revoke Fellow status will be handled in accordance with the procedures provided herein.<sup>3</sup>

Breaches of professional ethics might include sexual misconduct, racial discrimination, or other ethical violations. Sexual harassment or retaliation for declining, objecting to, or reporting harassment or other sexual conduct may constitute a serious breach of professional ethics. This policy covers professional activities wherever they take place. This includes, but is not limited to, academic buildings, laboratories, field sites, research stations, field course venues, professional meetings, or any such professional settings. This policy includes interactions with persons such as, but not limited to, colleagues, subordinates, students, teaching or research assistants or others with whom the Fellow interacts as part of the Fellow’s professional activities.

A request for revocation of Fellow status must include an investigative report that documents findings, sanctions, or actions taken from an independent organization or agency, an organization affiliated with AAAS, or AAAS itself<sup>4</sup>. Alternatively, a public announcement of the information in a report, or actions that have been taken, may be submitted. Media reports alone may not be sufficient to support a revocation request. AAAS will only consider requests for revocation filed within four years of publication of the report or announcement of the finding, sanction, or action, and will not consider requests when the Fellow is deceased.

**Procedures:**

1. A request for revocation should be made in writing to the governance manager in the Executive Office of the AAAS. Requests may be sent to: [fellowinquiry@aaas.org](mailto:fellowinquiry@aaas.org). In all steps of these Procedures, the identity of the requestor will generally not be revealed by the Executive Office except as may be required by a court of competent jurisdiction or as otherwise required to comply with AAAS' legal obligations.
2. A request must include an investigative report and/or public announcement of findings or actions taken (or links thereto) from a credible body such as the Federal government's Office of Research Integrity, other Federal or state agencies (e.g., NSF, NIH), a professional organization, an academic institution, a court of law, or admission(s) of conduct by the Fellow. Requests for revocation may only be made by a member of the AAAS. The member must include detailed information about the sources used, in order to enable verification of information. In addition, the member must agree in writing to maintain the confidentiality of the matter until its conclusion at AAAS.
3. AAAS Executive Office staff will conduct a preliminary review to determine if the request is substantive, has adequate documentation, and complies with these Procedures. As a result of this review, either these Procedures will continue or the request will be dismissed. In either case, the staff will provide a report to the AAAS Committee on Council Affairs (CCA).
4. During revocation procedures, deliberations on claims will be based on the evidence provided. Investigations by AAAS of complaints or charges beyond information presented in the request or otherwise available publicly (such as publications or court records) will not occur as part of revocation procedures.<sup>5</sup>
5. Based on the submitted documents, the CCA will decide whether to proceed with revocation procedures or to dismiss the request. If the CCA proceeds, it will appoint a Revocation Panel of four current CCA or Council members to rule on the request. The Revocation Panel will remain active until a determination has been made on the request. This work may continue past the end of a CCA or Council member's term.
6. If the CCA decides to proceed, the Fellow and the Steering Group of the relevant Section which originally voted on the Fellow will be notified of the request for revocation in writing and in confidence. The Fellow will be offered the option to resign their Fellow status. The CCA will also define a timeline for the process. The Fellow will be given notice of the request, with the supporting documentation and the names of all CCA members. The Fellow will be invited to respond in writing to the request, and if desired, to make an oral presentation to the Revocation Panel which will ordinarily occur via telephone conference. Such conference will not include any representatives of the Fellow and will be limited in time and scope per the direction of the Revocation Panel. The Steering Group may provide a written response within the timeframe defined by CCA.
7. After the deadline for responses has passed, the Revocation Panel will consider the original request, any responses, including the oral presentation/conference with the Fellow, if any, and may also consider any other pertinent information of public or official record. The Revocation Panel will discuss and vote on a motion of revocation. An affirmative vote of three of the four on the Revocation Panel is required for this motion to pass. The decision of the Revocation Panel is the final decision and there is no appeal.<sup>6</sup>
8. After the decision is made, the Revocation Panel will provide a summary report to the CCA. The report will indicate if the motion passed or not, but neither the vote tally nor the decisions of individual members of the Revocation Panel will be included. AAAS Executive Office staff

will share this report with the AAAS Board, the Steering Group of the Fellow's Section, the member who submitted the request, and the Fellow.

9. If the AAAS Executive Office staff determine that there should be an announcement or publication of the decision to revoke Fellow status, the background factors or bases for the revocation may be included in the announcement.
10. Reinstatement: After a Fellow's status has been revoked or a Fellow has resigned under the procedures of this Policy, should significant, material new evidence come to light that would call into question the conclusion to revoke Fellow status, a member may request reinstatement. The process and procedure for reinstatement will be substantively equivalent to the procedure to revoke Fellow status.

Proviso: The four-year time limit for submitting revocation requests will be waived for the first two years this policy is in effect.

Proviso: The CCA will report on actions taken under this policy at each Council meeting.

Proviso: The CCA will review this policy and bring forward to the Council not more than two years after the policy is in effect any proposed changes to this policy.

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<sup>1</sup>This policy will be available publicly on the AAAS web site with other Fellows program policies.

<sup>2</sup> Being named an AAAS Fellow is expected to be a lifetime honor. This revocation policy is still applicable to Fellows who have allowed their membership to lapse, but the AAAS will not consider requests when a Fellow is deceased. The AAAS maintains a comprehensive list of all Fellows since 1874: <https://www.aaas.org/historic-fellows>.

<sup>3</sup> It is the responsibility of the chair of the CCA, working with AAAS Executive Office staff, to ensure that all steps are followed in a timely manner and to make procedural decisions consistent with this document.

<sup>4</sup> A finding from AAAS itself could be the basis for a revocation request, such as a report produced due to an investigation of alleged inappropriate behavior at the AAAS meeting.

<sup>5</sup> Among statements that would be relevant when deliberating on "commonly held standards" is the *AAAS Statement of Scientific Freedom and Responsibility*: <https://www.aaas.org/page/aaas-statement-scientific-freedom-responsibility>.

<sup>6</sup> If a revocation request based on a specific finding (e.g. a report) is not supported in the process, a new documented finding would be necessary if another revocation request is made for the same Fellow.