

# The President's Research Medals Program

## Purpose

The President's Research Medals Program recognizes faculty members who have made significant contributions to their respective fields through research, scholarship, and creative activity. The specific objectives are to:

- **Acknowledge** outstanding research achievements across various career stages.
- **Incentivize** faculty to pursue high-quality, impactful research.
- **Enhance** the university's research profile to attract and retain top talent.
- **Promote** a culture of scholarly excellence within the university and the broader academic community.

## Award Categories

To recognize a broad range of scholarly accomplishments, the program features three distinct medals of increasing precedence:

1. **The President's Medal for Early Career Research Excellence (Bronze Medal)**
  - a. **Target:** Emerging scholars who demonstrate exceptional potential and a rapid upward trajectory in research impact.
  - b. **Focus:** Quality of early output and future research potential.
2. **The President's Medal for Distinguished Scholarship (Silver Medal)**
  - a. **Target:** Established researchers who have achieved international recognition and significantly advanced their field.
  - b. **Focus:** Significance of research, impact, and publication record.
3. **The President's Research Medal (Gold Medal)**
  - a. **Target:** Senior faculty with a sustained record of excellence, leadership, and institutional impact.
  - b. **Focus:** Long-term impact, international recognition, mentorship, and academic leadership.

## Eligibility

- **Faculty Status:** All full-time faculty members holding professorial rank (including clinical track) at LAU are eligible.
- **Affiliation:** Selection is based on the impact of research published under an LAU affiliation. Research conducted exclusively under the affiliation of other institutions will not be considered.

- **Frequency:** Each medal is awarded annually. If no suitable candidates are identified for a category, that medal will not be awarded that year.
- **Re-Eligibility:** Faculty members may receive each specific medal category only once. Recipients of the Early Career or Distinguished Scholarship medals remain eligible for higher-tier medals in future cycles, provided they meet the criteria and a minimum of four years has passed since the previous award.

### Category-Specific Constraints:

- **Early Career:** Assistant or Associate Professors within seven years of receiving their terminal degree, with a minimum of three years of service at LAU (extensions allowed for documented career breaks).
- **Distinguished Scholar:** Associate or Full Professors with a minimum of five years of service at LAU.
- **Research Medal:** Full Professors with at least 10 years of service at LAU.

### Selection Process

To ensure objectivity and prestige, the program utilizes a strictly nomination-based, two-stage system. Self-nominations are not permitted.

#### *Phase 1: Nomination (Screening)*

- **Nominators:** Nominations may be submitted by Deans, Chairpersons, or peer faculty members. The nominator must specify the relevant category.
- **Requirements:** A simplified submission consisting of:
  - A formal letter of nomination outlining the candidate's achievements relevant to the category.
  - The candidate's Curriculum Vitae (CV).
- **Action:** A GSR-appointed Screening Committee, constituted under the committee-governance rules below, reviews nominations for eligibility, completeness, conflicts of interest, and alignment with the award category, and recommends a shortlist of finalists for each category.

#### *Phase 2: Finalist Dossier (In-Depth Review)*

- Shortlisted finalists will be invited to submit a full portfolio, including:
  - **Research Statement:** A statement (up to 5 pages) describing the research program, its significance, and future directions.
  - **Key Outputs:** Copies of up to 10 representative publications or research outputs.

- **Impact Letters:** Finalists provide a list of 5-7 potential arm's-length external reviewers and a list of conflicted individuals. The Selection Committee will independently solicit at least three, and preferably five, confidential external evaluation letters from this list or from other senior experts selected by the Committee. These letters are central evidence in assessing scholarly significance, disciplinary impact, originality, methodological or creative quality, and the candidate's standing in the field. The letters remain confidential and are not shared with the candidate.

## **Committee Governance and Membership**

### *General Standards*

- **General member qualifications:** Voting faculty members on screening, evaluation, selection, appeals, and validation bodies must be tenured whenever feasible; members of the Selection and Appeals Committees should normally be full professors or scholars of equivalent senior standing. Members must have strong research, scholarship, or creative activity records; recognized disciplinary standing; and no conflict of interest with candidates under review.
- **Faculty Senate representation:** Key committees must include at least one, and may include two, Faculty Senate representatives. Senate representatives must be tenured, preferably at full professor rank, and must have a strong research record and disciplinary standing appropriate to the award.
- **Appointment and terms:** The President appoints the Selection, Appeals, and Validation Committees in consultation with the Provost, the Dean of GSR, and Faculty Senate leadership. The Dean of GSR appoints the Screening Committee in consultation with the Provost and Faculty Senate leadership. Voting members normally serve staggered three-year terms, renewable once. Interim appointments fill the unexpired term. A member may not serve more than two consecutive terms on the same committee.
- **Public membership/confidential deliberations:** Committee rosters, member roles, and terms will be posted before the start of each award cycle. Deliberations, scores, rankings, external letters, votes, and candidate comparisons remain confidential.

### *Screening Committee*

- **Composition:** Seven voting members, including a chair appointed by the Dean of GSR, at least five tenured faculty representing major disciplinary areas across the university, and at least one Faculty Senate representative. No more than two voting members should come from the same school unless disciplinary coverage requires it.
- **Role:** Verify eligibility, completeness, category fit, and conflicts of interest; apply the published criteria at a preliminary level; and recommend a shortlist of finalists.

### *Evaluation Panels*

- **Composition:** Where specialized expertise is required, the Selection Committee may convene discipline-specific Evaluation Panels of three to five tenured faculty members or external scholars with strong research records and disciplinary standing. Panel members are advisory and may not have conflicts of interest.
- **Role:** Review dossiers and external letters for scholarly significance, disciplinary impact, research quality, and field-specific norms. Panels provide written advisory summaries to the Selection Committee but do not make final award decisions.

### *Selection Committee*

- **Composition:** Nine to eleven voting members, including a senior tenured full professor as chair; six to eight tenured faculty members representing the university's major disciplinary areas; one to two Faculty Senate representatives meeting the qualifications above; and, where appropriate, one to two external scholars or previous recipients. The Dean of GSR serves ex officio and non-voting, unless otherwise designated by the President.
- **Role:** Review the finalist dossiers, give central weight to external evaluation letters, apply the published criteria, and recommend recipients to the President. The Committee may recommend that no medal be awarded in a category if the external evidence and internal evaluation do not support the required level of distinction.

### *Appeals Committee*

- **Composition:** Five tenured faculty members not involved in the same cycle's screening, evaluation, or selection, including at least one Faculty Senate representative and a senior full professor as chair.
- **Role:** Review written candidate appeals limited to procedure, eligibility, conflict of interest, or material administrative error. The Appeals Committee does not re-evaluate scholarly merit; it may recommend that the matter be upheld, corrected, or returned to the Selection Committee for reconsideration.

### *Validation Committee*

- **Composition:** Three members appointed by the President or Provost, including one representative from GSR, one senior faculty member not involved in selection, and one Faculty Senate representative not involved in the same cycle.
- **Role:** Before public announcement, confirm that eligibility checks, committee composition, conflicts of interest, external letters, voting procedures, and confidentiality requirements were followed.

## *Feedback to Candidates*

- Candidates who are not selected may request a general written explanation within 15 business days of notification. The Dean of GSR, in consultation with the Selection Committee chair, may provide high-level feedback on the decision rationale and areas of relative strength or weakness, without disclosing confidential deliberations, external reviewer identities, individual votes, rankings, or comparisons with other candidates.

## **Selection Criteria**

The Selection Committee prioritizes scholarly quality over quantity, using external evaluation letters as central evidence and applying the following weighted criteria:

### *I. Primary Criteria (Core Excellence)*

- **Significance and Impact:** Originality and influence on the field or practical applications.
- **Scholarly Excellence:** Technical rigor and methodological soundness.
- **Publication Record:** Quality of venues and impact of published work.
- **External Peer Evaluation:** Confidential external letters are central to assessing scholarly significance, disciplinary impact, originality, research or creative quality, and standing in the field.

### *II. Secondary Criteria (Engagement & Growth)*

- **Extramural Funding:** Prestige and scale of external grants secured.
- **Mentorship:** Success and placement of mentored undergraduate and graduate students.
- **Leadership & Collaboration:** Contributions to interdisciplinary teams and research leadership.

### *III. Tertiary Criteria (Broader Reach)*

- **Societal Impact:** Policy influence, commercialization, or public engagement.
- **Dissemination:** Technical reports, software development, and conference presentations.

### Weighting Matrix

Criteria Emphasis	Early Career Medal	Distinguished Scholar Medal	Research Medal
Scholarly Excellence	Substantial (Rigor/Quality)	Substantial (Consistency)	Substantial (Sustained)
Significance & Impact	Secondary (Emerging)	Primary (Field Influence)	Primary (Long-term)
Future Potential	Primary	Secondary	N/A
Mentorship	Incidental	Secondary	Primary
Leadership/Service	Incidental	Secondary	Substantial (Institutional)
Funding/Grants	Secondary	Secondary /Substantial	Substantial

### Awards and Prizes

Recipients receive a physical medal and a monetary award:

1. **Early Career Excellence:** Bronze Medal + \$7,500.
2. **Distinguished Scholarship:** Silver Medal + \$10,000.
3. **Research Medal:** Gold Medal + \$15,000.

**Public Lecture:** Recipients will deliver a public lecture showcasing their research during the annual LAU Research Day, where the medals will be formally conferred.

### Timeline

- **Call for Nominations:** Late September.
- **Nomination Deadline (Phase 1):** Late October.

- **Finalist Dossier Deadline (Phase 2):** Late January.
- **External Evaluation, Evaluation Panel Review, and Selection Committee Review:** February–March.
- **Process Validation and Announcement of Recipients:** April.
- **Candidate Feedback and Procedural Appeals:** Following notification, within the deadlines stated in these guidelines.
- **Award Ceremony and Lecture:** April (LAU Research Day).

## **Review and Amendment**

- **Administration:** The Dean of GSR is responsible for the implementation of the program.
- **Review:** Guidelines may be amended periodically by the President in consultation with the Provost, the Dean of GSR, and Faculty Senate leadership.
- **Dissemination:** Policies will be published via the university website and the faculty handbook.