

Sec pol 10.3.4

CATEGORY: MEMBERSHIP

TITLE: **Meritorious Service Awards Policy**

PRINCIPLES: BACKGROUND

Amnesty International is a grassroots, membership-driven movement. There are many dedicated and active members in the Australian Section who generously contribute their time and energy to promote and defend human rights.

AI Australia acknowledges this member activism by recognising members and groups who have shown outstanding and long-term service to the organisation.

Research has shown that Amnesty International Australia (AIA) needs to acknowledge and reward member activism. The aim of this policy is:

- to establish an awards system at both a national and regional level which is appropriate to an organisation such as AIA;
- to specify criteria for the nomination and selection of candidates.

PROCEDURE: **A. NATIONAL AWARD**

1. NATURE OF THE AWARD

The national award takes the form of the AIA freedom candleholder with the name of the recipient of the award (awardee) and the year of the award inscribed. A book with the names and a short profile of the awardees shall be kept in the Section office.

2. NOMINATION PROCEDURE

The National Board calls for nominations from the general membership by using relevant print and electronic networks six months before the National Annual General Meeting (NAGM). Every member of AIA can nominate one or more members, or AIA groups. Members or groups cannot nominate themselves.

Nominations must be in writing and ***should state why a person or group is being nominated***, and outline the nominee's involvement in AIA activism, addressing the selection criteria in this policy. Nominations for individuals should not only list the various positions that a nominee might have held within AIA, but should also describe some of the nominee's achievements in those positions and why they are important for AIA. If the nominee is a group, the nomination should list the achievements and the importance of these achievements for AIA.

Nominations are to be sent to the Branch Committee of the region where the nominee is

based. The Branch Committee recommends the nominations it considers most appropriate to the National Board. Each Branch Committee may recommend no more than two candidates each year. The Branch Committee should state in writing why it supports a particular candidate or group. It does not have to make any recommendations to the National Board if it is of the opinion that none of the nominations meets the appropriate standard. It does not have to give any reasons why it does not support a nomination.

The National Board will review the recommendations and make the final decision. The National Board will inform each Branch Committee which has nominated a candidate or group of its final decision. The National Board does not have to give reasons for its decision.

The award is limited to one person or group per year. The National Board does not have to give out the award every year if there are no suitable candidates or groups.

3. SELECTION CRITERIA

Candidates are limited to AIA members and AIA groups at the time of nomination.

Candidates for the award must have:

- participated in AIA activism for at least ten years. In exceptional circumstances the National Board may decide that a lesser period is sufficient. Periods of paid employment for AIA do not count.

Candidates or groups must have made an outstanding and meritorious contribution to AIA activism. Contributions may have been in any of the following areas:

- participation in an action group or other activist structure;
- work as a member or group in a region or the National Board;
- work as an office volunteer; and
- any other activity the Branch Committees and the National Board consider to be appropriate.

It is intended that the award should be made only for an outstanding level of service. To ensure that the award retains its value, it should be given only after careful consideration of nominations.

While AIA greatly appreciates the generosity of its donors, some of whom repeatedly give sizeable donations, it is not intended that donating money in itself should count as a form of service for the purposes of this policy.

Candidates or groups must not have received the national award previously. A candidate or group is not precluded from receiving the national award on the basis that he/she/they have previously received a regional award.

1. NOTIFICATION

The National Board will notify the awardee and ask whether he/she or they are willing to accept the award.

2. PRESENTATION OF THE AWARD

The National President presents the award at the National Annual General Meeting. If the awardee is not present, the award will be presented to the delegates of the awardee's Region, who in turn will ensure that the award will be presented to the awardee at an appropriate event in the region. AIA will fund the awardee's attendance to the award presentation including transport, accommodation and dinner, but does not fund the awardee's attendance to the National Annual General Meeting. The National President or a delegate of the awardee's region should read a citation.

AIA's publications will feature a short profile of each year's awardee.

B. REGIONAL AWARDS

1. NATURE OF THE AWARD

The regional award takes the form of a framed certificate signed by the National President and the respective Branch President. The certificates are uniform throughout the regions. Each regional office should keep a book featuring a profile of the Region's awardees.

2. NOMINATION PROCEDURE

Each Branch Committee calls for nominations from the Region's general membership by using relevant print and electronic networks at least two months prior to the Branch Annual General Meeting (BAGM).

Any member of AIA in the Region can nominate one or more members or AIA groups in the Region. Members or groups cannot nominate themselves. Nominations must be in writing and outline the candidate's involvement in AIA activism.

Nominations are to go to the respective Branch Committees, which will decide who receives the award. Branch Committees do not have to give reasons for their decisions. Each Branch Committee should not give out more than two awards per year. The award does not have to be given every year if there are no suitable candidates.

3. SELECTION CRITERIA

Candidates are limited to AIA members and AIA groups at the time of nomination.

Candidates for the award must have:

- participated in AIA activism for at least five years. In exceptional circumstances a Branch Committee may decide that a lesser period is sufficient. Periods of paid employment for AIA do not count.

Candidates or groups must have made an outstanding and meritorious contribution to AIA activism. Contributions may have been in the following areas:

- participation in an action group or other activist structure;
- work as a member a group or in a region;
- work as an office volunteer; or
- any other activity the Branch Committees consider to be appropriate.

While AIA greatly appreciates the generosity of its donors, some of whom repeatedly give sizeable donations, it is not intended that donating money in itself should count as a form of service for the purposes of this policy.

Candidates or groups must not have received the regional award previously.

4. NOTIFICATION

The Branch Committee will notify the awardees and ask whether they are willing to accept the award.

5. PRESENTATION OF THE AWARD

The awards are presented at the BAGMs or at any other occasion which the Branch Committee considers appropriate. If a Branch Committee chooses an event other than the BAGM, the award should be presented no later than six months after the BAGM. If the Award is presented at a BAGM, the Branch Committee may fund travel for the awardee to the award presentation. AIA's regional publications will feature a short profile of each year's awardee.

Initiated by:

MAC. Reviewed by AIA's Governance Committee.

Ratified by:

The National Executive Committee

Date introduced:

April 2000

Date for review

February 2015. Updated March 2009 and February 2012

Relevant to:

Members and Branch Committees