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AHFAP Recognition Programme

Governance Procedure

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Introduction: Reforming the system of AHFAP honours

In the several years preceding AHFAP Conference 2024, a broad consensus has been reached on the need to reform the way AHFAP recognises members for their outstanding contributions. Forming a dedicated workgroup to preserve AHFAP's heritage and legacy has been identified as the best starting point in defining a new model of rewards, that would align with AHFAP's modern structure, and fair and inclusive approach.

Following an informal pause in new Honorary Member nominations from 2020-2021 onwards, a formal moratorium was announced at the 2024 AGM, pending a review of AHFAP's approach to recognition. Following AGM approval, the AHFAP Heritage Special Interest Group was established to lead this work, bringing together the AHFAP Committee Chair as interim SIG Chair, a current Honorary Member as SIG Co-Chair, several existing Honorary Members and other interested members. The group worked alongside the AHFAP Committee to develop a modern, transparent and inclusive recognition programme that reflects the association's current structure and values.

Throughout 2025-2026, the group discussed establishing an AHFAP honours framework aligned with the organisation's current structure and inclusive values. The proposed changes were derived from joint discussions and shared views amongst AHFAP Heritage SIG and further refined by the AHFAP Committee, led by Chair and Honorary President.

Core Principles

The **AHFAP Recognition Programme** will reshape *Honorary Membership*. By means of a fair, transparent, inclusive and consistent selection process, it will celebrate individuals whose contribution, generosity, leadership, and professional engagement have significantly strengthened the association and the wider cultural heritage imaging community.

The programme will:

- Celebrate meaningful contribution to the association and sector
- Promote inclusivity and egalitarian representation
- Operate transparently and with consistency
- Avoid creating privileged classes of membership
- Recognise both visible and behind-the-scenes efforts
- Encourage and promote future participation and leadership
- Reflect the association's charitable and collaborative ethos

Terminology

Updated terminology reflects a shift from "status" to "contribution-based", and promotes recognition which is value-based, inclusive, future-focused and less hierarchical. The chosen terms promote a language that is descriptive, contemporary, non-elitist, helps reduce bias and is easier to govern fairly. Intention is to move away from appointing people into an *exclusive permanent class,* and focus on recognition based on a clearly defined, transparent and meaningful contribution.

AHFAP Recognition Programme – to replace term *Honorary Membership*
Association Fellow – recipients title, with the contribution type recorded separately (see below). Title to replace *Honorary Member* in general terms, for example in the Membership Subscription band.

Recognition criteria:

Professional Impact
Leadership
Emerging Contribution
Lifetime Contribution

Permanent Recognition - Recognition is permanent as a historical record, but AHFAP may suspend or remove public recognition in exceptional circumstances where continuing to display the recognition would materially conflict with AHFAP's values or cause significant reputational harm.

Qualifications: Recognition types

1. ***Professional Impact*** – Recognises individuals whose knowledge, expertise, innovation or professional practice has made a significant contribution to the development of cultural heritage imaging and the wider profession.
2. ***Distinguished Leadership*** – Recognises individuals who have demonstrated sustained and meaningful leadership through service, collaboration, initiative or influence, strengthening AHFAP, its membership or the wider professional community.
3. ***Emerging Talent*** – For rising contributors and newer leaders. Recognises individuals whose significant contribution is relatively recent or sits within a less-visible expertise. Demonstrating initiative, innovation, professional engagement or potential to make a lasting contribution to AHFAP or the wider field.
4. ***Lifetime Contribution*** – Rare, reserved for truly exceptional cases. Recognises individuals whose exceptional and sustained contribution over many years has had a lasting impact on AHFAP, cultural heritage imaging or the wider professional community.

Benefits

Benefit	**Description and terms**
Association Fellow status	Permanent recognition
Membership fee	Concession level (*Association Fellow* membership band)
Membership duration	Permanent category; Normal membership renewal rules (Renewal managed at Fellow Member's discretion)
Voting privileges	Same as ordinary membership; no additional rights
Governance/ Committee roles	Same as other members; no automatic entitlement
Conference recognition	One-time announcement at AGM/ conference
Website recognition	Permanent inclusion in honourable listing
Physical or financial award	None
Directory listing	Normal membership rules
Conference discount	Normal membership rules
Right to decline	Yes
Right to withdraw public recognition	Yes
AHFAP power to remove recognition	Exceptional circumstances only

Eligibility Criteria for Nominees

1. Current or former association member
2. Professional integrity and collaborative conduct
3. Alignment with association values and positive impact on the sector or membership
4. Re-nominations: An unsuccessful nomination may be resubmitted in a subsequent year where there is additional evidence or where the panel's previous decision was based on a different category or incomplete evidence.
5. Self-nominations are permitted (an independent supporter/endorser required)

Nominations: Open Annual Call

Nominator may suggest a category, but the panel reserves authority to change it.
An individual may receive *only one* Recognition Programme award in any 5-year period.
Nomination period: opens in May ahead of conference planning. It will remain open for 6-8 weeks (subject to panel decision to close early due to significant number of nominations)
Submission: via website form and email to AHFAP Committee Chair.

Requirements (400-word limit) including:

- short rationale/ contribution description
- impact
- evidence/ examples
- optional additional information or seconder

Selection Process and Panel

Reviewing Panel

Small review group, appointed by Committee Chair and President, with 5 panellists selected on yearly basis. This approach would ensure fresh perspectives, low workload and diverse institutional capture. Review group consisting of:

- One AHFAP Committee representative
- One previous recipient
- One ordinary member
- One SIG/working-group representative
- One independent or international member

Conflict of Interest

- Panel members must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest. The AHFAP Committee Chair of the Reviewing Panel will determine whether the member should withdraw from discussion and decision-making on that nomination. The conflict and action taken will be recorded.
- A panel member may not nominate or endorse a person whom they will subsequently assess.

- Sponsorship, commercial membership, purchasing services from AHFAP, or other financial relationships with AHFAP do not create eligibility or preferential consideration.

Review Sessions

Review group to gather annually in a single 90-minute online meeting, in early September, with the following rolling agenda:

- The Panel will discuss previously circulated nominations
- The Panel will assess each nomination against the published criteria of significance of contribution, impact, collaborative/professional conduct and alignment with AHFAP's purposes and values.
- The Panel will consider the overall balance of recognition across the programme to identify whether particular professional roles, career stages or forms of contribution may be systematically overlooked.
- Demographic characteristics will not be scored or used as an individual selection criterion.
- The Panel will make recommendation to the AHFAP Committee

Disclaimer

The AHFAP Committee ratifies the recommendations unless there is a procedural, eligibility or governance concern. The AHFAP Committee may not substitute its own substantive preference without referring the nomination back to the panel.

No scoring spreadsheets needed unless explicitly desired.

Panel notes and unsuccessful nominations will be retained for 2 years, with no public access.

No award will be made where the panel concludes that no nomination meets the published threshold.

No appeal against the Reviewing Panel's and AHFAP Committee’s substantive judgment.

Maximum 1–2 people awarded annually.

Announcements and Publishing

1. Successful nominees receive confirmation by late September
2. Unsuccessful nominators receive a short generic explanation
3. Detailed panel deliberations remain confidential; no ranking of unsuccessful nominees is published
4. Conference recognition during AGM
5. Permanent inclusion in honourable listing on website