



National Commission for Science and Technology

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE MALAWI AWARD FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENT

1. Introduction

The MASTA is a prestigious national award honouring achievement and excellence in scientific and technological research. It is conferred upon any individuals, groups or institutions that make an innovation, invention or discovery within Malawi, which is likely to promote and accelerate the social and economic progress of the country, necessary for wealth creation and transforming peoples livelihoods in line with the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III and the new vision, Malawi 2063. The award comprises an appropriate symbol (a shield or medal), a certificate of citation and such sum of money as the NCST Board may determine from time to time.

2. Aims and Objectives of the MASTA

- (a) To nurture initiative and creativity in the promotion of scientific and technological achievements in Malawi;
- (b) To foster the utilization of such achievements in Malawi; and
- (c) To catalyse and propel the development of scientific and technological capability and capacity in Malawi.

3. Category of Achievement

The Awards Committee shall consider the following categories of achievement:-

- (a) Innovation or adaptation of known technology or processes for use in Malawi;
- (b) Design of prototype of industrial plants, machinery or equipment for manufacture or use in the country; and
- (c) Any other achievements in R&D that have some socioeconomic significance.

4. Evaluation Criteria

The Awards Committee shall consider the importance of an innovation or invention in its application to the search for the solution of the various social and economic problems of the country. The potential catalytic effect of the claimed invention, innovation or discovery in accelerating development in Malawi and/or its global novelty and innovative character shall be the basic criteria to be used in considering an application for the award. In evaluating individual application, the following criteria shall be followed:

- (a) The relevance of the claim to Malawi Growth and Development Strategy III and the new vision, Malawi 2063 and the claim's potential impact on socioeconomic development and national transformation;
- (b) The claim's potential to increase productivity and/or efficiency;
- (c) Environmental impact of the invention;
- (d) The potential contribution of the claim to the advancement of knowledge generally; and
- (e) The originality of the claim.

5. Grading of Awards

In grading the awards it shall be recognized that whereas no one takes exception to the fact that science and technology create, accelerate and enhance the wealth of human kind in many sense, it should be appreciated that some of the impacts are evident, others are hidden; and some are immediate, others are long term but all-pervasive. It should also be appreciated that achievements in R&D differ in significance from one another. It is in recognition of these facts that to determine the grades and sizes of awards the following considerations shall be made:-

- (a) Category of the achievement; that is, whether it is an invention, discovery, innovation or adaptation;
- (b) The complexity involved in the invention, discovery, innovation or adaptation, that is, whether each of the claimed R&D results is simple, relatively complex or highly complex;
- (c) The potential impact of the achievement on the socioeconomic and technological capability and capacity of the country;
- (d) Environmental Impact; and
- (e) Whether the claimed R&D result is in consonance with the country's development goals.

Each of the above-mentioned factors shall be given a numerical value and a combination of such values shall be used to determine the size of each award.

6. Application Procedure

All applications for the award shall be submitted in triplicate to the Commission. All applications shall be accompanied with referees' reports and recommendations.

For the purpose of evaluating a claim, the Awards Committee may commission experts in the scientific field in which the claim is made to assess the claim and to report its findings and recommendations back to the Committee.

7. Nature of the Awards

There are two sets of Technology Awards in order to recognize and encourage:

- (a) Technology development and multidisciplinary team effort of local scientists, and
- (b) Technological output of local institutes.

The MASTA Award may be given as follows:-

- (a) Science and Technology Prizes. Prizes in natural, physical and social sciences shall be awarded in recognition of individual or group achievement. Each prize will consist of a citation and prize money; and

- (b) Technology Prizes and Shields. Two shields, one each for processing and engineering technology, and prize money shall be awarded to a local S&T laboratory in recognition of excellence of its specific technological achievements in the above-mentioned areas. Each Award shall consist of a shield to be held in rotation for one year by the laboratory winning it and a plaque to be retained by it.

8. Nominations

The Award is for research contributions made in Malawi primarily during the five years preceding the year of the prize. Nominations shall be routed through Heads of local S&T institutions, institutions of affiliation or professional bodies. Nomination forms for individual/group and institutional applications can be accessed through NCST's website: www.ncst.mw.

Any scientist, engineer or technologist who has been awarded a prize may in subsequent years send nomination of one person in his/her discipline only for each year's award.

A candidate once nominated is considered for a period of five years, if otherwise eligible. In case a nominee has resigned from the present position in Malawi and has gone abroad, his/her nomination would not remain valid for further consideration. An individual nominating himself/herself for an award shall not be considered.

The nominations duly signed by the sponsor should be sent to the Director General, National Commission for Science and Technology.