

All about the Gold Badge Award

Here you will find answers to these questions:

What is it?

To whom has it been awarded?

Who can be nominated?

How do I make a nomination?

How are the recipients selected?

How is the award presented?

The EFDSS Gold Badge is the highest award the Society can confer and it may be awarded to:

“Those who have made unique or outstanding contributions to the art or science of folk dance, music or song; or

Those who have rendered distinguished service to the aims of the Society through their exceptional contribution.”

The first gold badge was awarded in 1922 and since then nearly 150 awards have been made. All who have received this award are listed here and details of the awards and the award ceremonies are frequently included in *English Dance and Song*. Many of those listed are or were household names in the world of folk because they are performers, writers or teachers. Others will be less well known as they have contributed more locally or have worked behind the scenes, perhaps assisting with running festivals or the Society itself.

If you are thinking of making a nomination you might find it helpful to find out more about those who have already received an award. A citation setting out the reasons for making the award is read when the award is presented and a selection of recent award citations is included here. If you are interested in a particular citation the Vaughan Williams Memorial Library will be able to help as it holds copies of all the citations.

Nominees need not be members of the Society but all holders of the Gold Badge are given life membership of the Society.

How to make a nomination

Anyone can make a nomination which should be submitted in writing or (preferably) by e-mail to the Company Secretary of the Society, who will acknowledge the nomination and pass it to the Awards Committee. Nominations should be sent c/o Cecil Sharp House and/or forwarded to secretary@efdss.org .

Nominations can be made at any time and are normally considered in the Spring so that awards can be announced in the Autumn. There is no form to complete

but you should include the following information:

the name, address and telephone number of the person being nominated;

the names address and telephone of the person making the nomination and any Seconder;

the reasons with appropriate evidence why the person nominated should receive the award.

Points to bear in mind when making a nomination

Do not consult the person you want to nominate as it is important that they are not aware that they might be a candidate for an award.

Do not canvass lots of others to write in to support the nomination. It is the quality of the evidence provided that is important not the size of postbag.

There is no need to write a full citation, the bare facts will do though you may be able to suggest who might write the citation if the award is made

A minimum of information will be needed about those who are nationally known. The name of the person nominated may be all that is required but more will be needed about those who are not so well known or who have worked locally. If you are in doubt as to how much others including the Awards Committee might already know about your candidate you might be ask the Company Secretary who will seek guidance from the Awards Committee.

Award holders, known or less well known, will have made a difference and/or brought distinction to the world of folk. In doing so they will have earned the respect of their peers and changed and achieved much. So what sort of information do you need to include? :

Make it clear the areas or roles in which the nominee has excelled;

How the nominee has demonstrated that excellence;

How their contribution has made an impact, where and for whom;

Over what period of time they have contributed;

Have others recognised that contribution (for example in the Queen's Birthday awards; a media award; or an honorary degree). The prior receipt of such an award does not prevent the Society awarding its gold badge; indeed it may high light an oversight on our part.

Make clear how the nominee stands out from those doing similar things

List notable achievements and high lights

The Awards Committee

Each year the Society's National Council appoints or reappoints up to five persons, including the Chair of National Council, to form the Awards Committee. The Award Committee members, some of whom will be Gold Badge holders themselves, will be representative of the Society's activities. Committee members need not be members of the Society and ideally their combined knowledge will encompass the widest range of folk arts including song, dance, and customs, morris and sword, print and broadcast media, events, research and education.

The Awards Committee may meet or hold confidential discussions by e-mail; to review each nominee presented for consideration that year. They will also review any nominations recommended by a previous Committee.

The Committee will normally meet in the Spring following which it will report in writing its recommendations to the National Council. Awards will not necessarily be made every year. The Committee's confidential report will include:

- a list of those people nominated
- the names of those recommended for the current year's Award
- the names of those recommended for future consideration

The report may make recommendations for nominees to be considered for awards in future years, should the list of potential Gold Badges be particularly large.

Unsuccessful nominees

Where an individual has been nominated but rejected for the current year by the Awards Committee their nominator will receive a letter to confirm they have not been successful this year.

When an individual has been nominated but rejected totally by the Awards Committee their nominator should receive a letter to confirm they have not been selected. A record is retained giving details of the reasons for rejection. Rejected nominees will not be automatically re-considered in future years and a new nomination must be received before the matter can be reviewed.

Details of rejected nominees remain confidential.

Successful nominees

Following the agreement of National Council a letter will be written to the successful nominee asking whether they would like to accept the award. The announcement of the awards, once the recipients have been notified and accepted, will be made in EDS and elsewhere confirming when and where the awards will be made.

The Award

Successful nominees will receive a Gold Badge, which will be presented at a suitable event. We will have regard to the nominee's wishes in selection of the occasion of the presentation. Not only is this important to the nominee and his friends but the promotional importance of our Gold Badge awards for our members as a whole and for the wider folk audience should also be considered. The nominee may be asked to nominate appropriate persons to write and to read the citation at the Awards ceremony.