

2023 Breakthrough Awards Nomination Submission Guide

Overview

All Breakthrough award nominations are submitted online through a [nomination system](#) based on USC's sponsored awards proposal routing system USCeRA, a familiar interface for most USC faculty members. For all Breakthrough awards, both the nominee and the nominator have a role to play in completing nomination package. Completed nomination packages are ultimately finalized and submitted to the Office of the Vice President for Research by the nominator.

2023 Breakthrough Award nominations are due by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, October 14, 2022.

Nomination Package Preparation

Before starting the nomination inside of the system, the nominee and nominator should prepare the components of the nomination package listed in the guidelines and criteria document for the appropriate award. This will help to make the process of uploading/inputting these items more efficient.

Each award has different requirements and nomination package components, so it is important to ensure the nominee and nominator refer to the correct documentation when preparing the nomination package.

2023 Guidelines and Criteria documents are available for download at the links below:

- [Breakthrough Leadership in Research Award](#)
- [Breakthrough Stars Award](#)
- [Breakthrough Graduate Scholars Award](#)



New for 2023 Faculty Award Nominations:

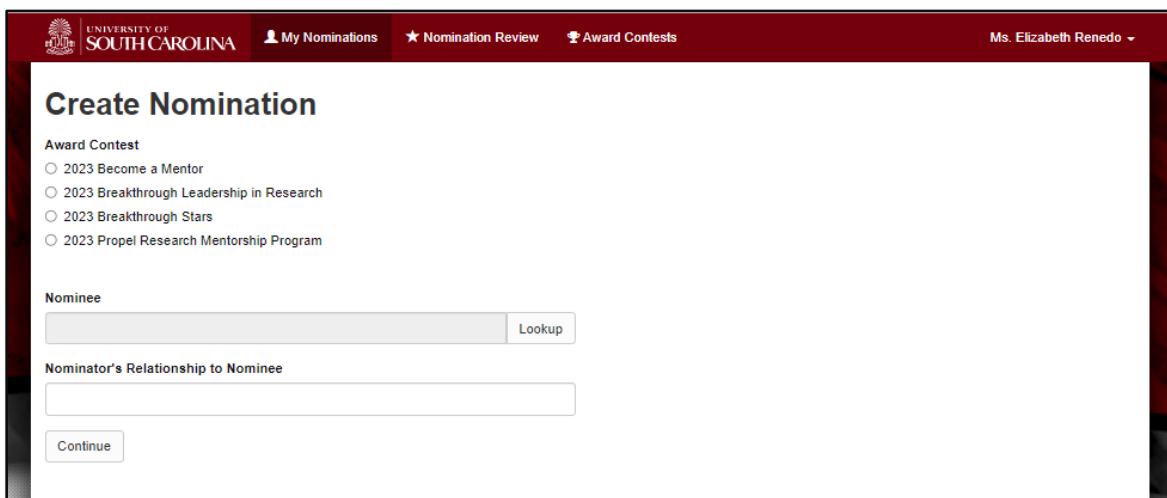
Each year, recipients of the two Breakthrough faculty awards—Stars and Leadership in Research—are featured in a special photo spread with a short write-up, in the annual Breakthrough awards booklet. To ensure 2023 Breakthrough faculty awards recipients have a chance to comment on their research careers, in their own words, we have included three new queries in the nominee questionnaires for these awards. We encourage all faculty nominees to take creative license in answering these new questions, providing their own interpretations and reflections. The new questions are listed below to aid in planning; all questions have a 4000-character limit.

1. Considering your research focus, what drew you to it initially, and what has kept you in those research questions over the years?
2. What's next for your research career?
3. How would you summarize the significance and impact of your research career — how has it advanced your own understanding of the research topic? How has it advanced your students and your particular academic discipline?

Submitting the Nomination Online

Nominator Steps 1-3

1. The nominator initiates the nomination process through the USCeRA-based system by logging in at vprinitatives.research.sc.edu, with the username and password he or she uses to access USC email, USCeRA, etc. When logged in, the nominator will begin on a screen titled “My Nominations.”
 - To initiate a new nomination, the nominator should click the red “+ Create Nomination” button.



The screenshot shows the 'Create Nomination' page within the USCeRA system. The header includes the University of South Carolina logo, navigation links for 'My Nominations', 'Nomination Review', and 'Award Contests', and the user name 'Ms. Elizabeth Renedo'. The main content area is titled 'Create Nomination' and contains the following elements:

- Award Contest:** A list of four radio button options: '2023 Become a Mentor', '2023 Breakthrough Leadership in Research', '2023 Breakthrough Stars', and '2023 Propel Research Mentorship Program'.
- Nominee:** A text input field followed by a 'Lookup' button.
- Nominator's Relationship to Nominee:** A text input field.
- Continue:** A button at the bottom left of the form.

2. On the “Create Nomination” screen (above), the nominator should select the desired award, then select the nominee using the “Lookup” tool to search for first and last name. Once the nominee is selected, the nominator enters a short description of their relationship to the nominee (colleague or mentor, for example). Once all selections are made, click the green “✓ Continue” button.
 - When a faculty member is selected, USCeRA will capture the nominee’s basic details like name, email, tenure status, etc., automatically.
 - See page 3 for special notes on creating Breakthrough Graduate Scholars nominations.



Special Notes for Creating Breakthrough Graduate Scholars Nominations:

- Only faculty members who are denoted in the nomination system as graduate directors will see the “2023 Breakthrough Graduate Scholars” option in the “Award Contest” list, as shown in the screenshot below.
- If you are a graduate director, but you are unable to see the Graduate Scholars option, please contact Debbie Gipson at GipsonD@mailbox.sc.edu or 803-777-5458 for support.
- When selecting a graduate student nominee who may not already be in the USCeRA system, enter the first three letters of the student’s first and last names to search the system.
 - If the student has an existing USCeRA account, the nominator may select him or her and basic details will be captured automatically.
 - If the student is not already a USCeRA user, the nominator will use the “Create Student Account” screen to fill in the complete first and last name, email address and department. The nominated student will then receive an email at the address entered and be prompted to complete their portion of the nomination steps.

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

My Nominations Nomination Review Award Contest

Create Nomination

Award Contest

- 2023 Become a Mentor
- 2023 Breakthrough Leadership in Research
- 2023 Breakthrough Stars
- 2023 Propel Research Mentorship Program
- 2023 Breakthrough Graduate Scholars

Nominee

Lookup

Nominator's Relationship to Nominee

Continue

The screenshot shows the 'Prepare Nomination' interface for Deborah Gipson. At the top, the University of South Carolina logo and navigation links for 'My Nominations', 'Nomination Review', and 'Award Contests' are visible. The user 'Ms. Elizabeth Renedo' is logged in. The main heading is 'Prepare Nomination' for 'Deborah Gipson'. Below this is a breadcrumb trail: 'My Nominations / Prepare Nomination'. A 'Details' box contains the following information:

- Award Contest:** 2023 Breakthrough Stars
- Nominee:** Deborah Gipson
- Nominee Department:** Office Research - General
- Nominee Job Title:** Administrative Manager I
- Nominator's Relationship to Nominee:** Colleague

To the right of the details is a 'Guideline Documents' button. Below the details is an 'Edit Nomination Information' button. A light blue callout box contains the following text:

Clicking on the button below will start the next step of the nomination process by notifying the nominee via email to login and complete their part of the nomination. You will receive an email once the nominee is finished with a link to this nomination so that you can then submit it to the Office of Research.

At the bottom of the callout is a 'Send to Nominee to Complete' button. The breadcrumb trail 'My Nominations / Prepare Nomination' is repeated at the bottom of the page.

- On the Prepare Nomination Screen (above), the nominator should review the nominee details to ensure the correct nominee has been selected for the intended award, then click “✓ Send to Nominee to Complete” button to send the nomination to the nominee who will complete his or her portion of the nomination package.
 - If the selected nominee or award is incorrect, use the grey “Edit Nomination” button to go back and adjust.
 - Remember, later in the process the nominator will upload the letter(s) of recommendation before submitting the final nomination package to the Office of Research. Refer to the specific award’s guidelines and criteria document for details on the required recommendation letter(s).

Nominee Steps 4-6

- The nominee will receive an email prompting him or her to log in and complete the nominee portion of the nomination package. When the nominee logs in (using normal credentials for accessing USCeRA, USC email, etc.), the nomination will appear on the “My Nominations” page, under the heading “You have been nominated” along the right-hand side of the page. Click the nomination to access the “Prepare Nomination” screen.

The screenshot displays the 'Prepare Nomination' interface for Deborah Gipson. At the top, the University of South Carolina logo and navigation tabs for 'My Nominations', 'Nomination Review', and 'Award Contests' are visible. The user's name, Deborah Gipson, is shown in the top right corner. The main heading is 'Prepare Nomination' with the user's name below it. A breadcrumb trail reads 'My Nominations / Prepare Nomination'. A 'Guideline Documents' button is located in the top right of the content area. The 'Details' section lists: Award Contest (2023 Breakthrough Stars), Nominee (Deborah Gipson), Nominee Department (Office Research - General), Nominee Job Title (Administrative Manager I), and Nominator's Relationship to Nominee (Colleague). Below this is the 'Nominee Questionnaire' section with a red button labeled '? Complete Nominee Questionnaire'. The 'Required Documents' section lists: Mentor Letter of Recommendation (nominator uploads), Nominee CV (nominee uploads, with an 'Upload Document' button), and Second Letter of Recommendation (nominator obtains and uploads). A second breadcrumb trail 'My Nominations / Prepare Nomination' is at the bottom.

- From the “Prepare Nomination” screen (above), the nominee will:
 - Upload an up-to-date CV (for faculty nominees only) in PDF format.
 - Click the red “? Complete Nominee Questionnaire” button to access and complete the questionnaire prompts associated with the award for which they are nominated.
 - Important notes on entering responses into the questionnaire:**
 - If the nominee pastes text that is longer than 4,000 characters into a response box, the characters over 4,000 will not be pasted. Nominees should check carefully to ensure that text has not been truncated. If it has, they must shorten the response to fit within the allotted 4,000 characters.
 - Nominees may begin their questionnaire, save it using the green

“Continue” button, and complete it later. To do this, nominees must enter placeholder text in all empty response boxes before saving.

- When working on questionnaire responses, users may click and drag the grey square in the lower right-hand corner of the response box to adjust the size of the box, if desired.
6. When the nominee has completed the questionnaire and uploaded a current CV (CV is a requirement for faculty nominees only), the nominee should click the green “✓ Submit to Nominator” button to electronically certify the information and return it to the nominator for final review and submission to the Office of Research.
- After the nominee has completed and submitted the questionnaire, the nominator will be able to review the nominee’s responses. The nominator cannot edit the nominee’s responses, but he or she can ask the nominee to make revisions (and save them) at any time before the final nomination package is submitted.

Nominator Final Step 7

7. The nominator will receive an email notification when the nominee completes their portion of the nomination package. The nominator’s final step is to log in and upload the letter(s) of recommendation, review the nominee’s questionnaire and CV (CV is a requirement for faculty nominees only) and ensure that all items are accurate. Once all items are final, click the green “✓ Submit Nomination to the Office of Research” button to send the package to the Office of Research for consideration.
- The nominator cannot edit the nominee’s questionnaire responses, however, he or she can ask the nominee to make and save changes at any time before the final nomination package is submitted to the Office of Research. The nomination package is not submitted until the nominator clicks the green “✓ Submit Nomination to the Office of Research” button.

For questions regarding the Breakthrough Awards or the nomination process, contact **Debbie Gipson** in the Office of the Vice President for Research.

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