



International Union of Geological Sciences

IUGS Émile Argand Medal

Terms of Reference

1. Rationale for naming the award

Émile Argand (1879-1940) was born in Eaux-Vives near Geneva, Switzerland. He started working as a draftsman, then began studies in medicine but was soon attracted by geology under the influence of Prof. Maurice Lugeon at the University of Lausanne. Émile Argand quickly developed an understanding of Alpine tectonics. In 1911, he secured a geology professorship at the University of Neuchâtel and published what soon became a classic memoir on the structure of Western Alps. His studies enabled him to improve knowledge of structural geology, as well as metamorphism and stratigraphy, of this key reference region in central Europe. Later, Émile Argand advanced from regional problems in Europe to geology on the planetary scale by accepting the challenge to prepare a geological map of Eurasia. The resulting map became famous, leading to Argand receiving the Spendiaroff Prize in 1913. After the publication by Alfred Wegener of his fundamental paper on continental drift in 1915, Émile Argand became a resolute supporter of that hypothesis. He used it as a framework to explain Eurasian structural development in his inaugural address to the Brussels International Geological Congress in 1922. In 1924, Émile Argand finished his masterpiece entitled “La Tectonique de l’Asie” in which he clearly developed modern ideas about tectonics following Alfred Wegener’s theory. Thus, the geologist Émile Argand was a key scientist in promoting new explanations of the folded and buckled strata of the Alps as well as undertaking the pioneering application of modern tectonics to the vast continent of Asia.

2. The award

2.1. Awardee profile

The **IUGS Émile Argand Medal** is IUGS highest award. It is intended to honour an active senior geoscientist of high international recognition and outstanding scientific record. His/her work might have included at least one major discovery that has been strongly influential in the understanding of Earth System Sciences; and/or leading a large scientific project, or projects, that have contributed significantly to establishing basic principles or ground-breaking observations for understanding Earth System processes; and/or has heralded new interdisciplinary developments for resourcing of energy, ore deposits or groundwater with possibly major impacts on socioeconomic issues. Mid-career scientists who have already made exceptional contributions should be given full consideration for the award.

2.2. Conditions

a) Nominees may or may not be involved in the Union’s activities, and may be from any Nation.

b) The award emphasizes eminent and ground-breaking scientific achievements. Teaching, administration and other services are not to be considered.

c) Current IUGS officers cannot be nominated.

2.3. Awarding procedure

The award is made at the discretion of the IUGS Executive Committee (EC) and applies to all scientific disciplines represented by the Union.

2.3.1. Call

Every four years and one year prior to an International Geological Congress, the award will be advertised through the IUGS e-bulletins, the IUGS webpage, the journal *Episodes* and elsewhere.

2.3.2. Nomination

Nominations can be made by anyone in the IUGS community and should be forwarded to the IUGS Secretary General not later than three months after the call.

Nominations shall consist of a formal letter, no more than three pages in length, summarizing the case for an award, plus at least five one-page letters of support, the nominee's CV, together with a list of publications.

A letter of acceptance of the candidate to be nominated is required. Up to three external reviewers can be suggested by the nominating person or organization but the EC is not constrained to using them when considering the application.

2.3.3. Selection

The recipient will be identified by an independent ad-hoc panel composed of not more than five external experts. All members of the panel of external experts shall evaluate all candidates. The EC will select the members of the panel following an open call. The selection of panel members will consider discipline, gender balance, geographic cover. The panel will propose the recipient to the EC which will make the final decision.

Nominees who are not accepted for the award can object if they consider that proper procedures have not been followed, but not on grounds of the selection criteria or the awardee selected. EC and the ad-hoc panel have one month to respond to any complaint. The decision of the EC is final.

2.3.4. Delivery

The **IUGS Emile Argand Award** shall be regularly awarded during each International Geological Congress with a short *laudatio* and presentation of a medal by the IUGS President followed by a keynote lecture by the awardee. The *laudatio* will then be published in *Episodes*.

2.4. Award

The recipient of the **IUGS Emile Argand Award** shall be presented with a purpose-made IUGS medal. Reasonable travel and accommodation costs -as specified in the award letter- incurred in receiving the medal at IGC will be covered.