

# 2026 IGU Honors and Awards Committee Report

## H&A Committee members 2025-2028

The IGU Executive Committee appointed in 2025 the following members of the IGU Honors and Awards Committee:

- Yazidhi Bamutaze (Uganda)
- Adriana Dorfman (Brazil)
- Yukio Himiyama (Japan)
- Helen Kerfoot (Canada)
- Gabriela Adina Morosanu (Romania)
- Chenghu Zhou (China-Beijing)
- Joos Droogleever Fortuijn (Netherlands), chair

## 2026 Nominations

The IGU Honors and Awards Committee received twenty-eight nominations for the four 2026 awards:

- The IGU Award for Distinguished Geographical Practice: thirteen nominations
- The IGU Early Career Award in Geography: ten nominations
- The IGU Lauréat d'Honneur: five nominations
- No nominations were submitted for the IGU Planet and Humanity Medal.

## 2026 Awards

In accordance with its guidelines, the Committee approved twelve awards:

For the IGU Award for Distinguished Geographical Practice:

- CHEN, Min (China-Beijing)
- LAHIRI-DUTT, Kuntala (Australia)
- ROMERO ARAVENA, Hugo Iván (Chile)
- ROWE-GONZALEZ, Francisco Javier (United Kingdom)

For the IGU Early Career Award in Geography:

- KAN, Zihan (China-Hong Kong)
- LIU, Dong (China-Beijing)
- SI, Qiao (China-Beijing)
- SIKKA, Gaurav (India)
- TADAKI, Marc (New Zealand)

For the IGU Lauréat d'Honneur:

- KNOWLES, Richard (United Kingdom)
- KWAN, Mei-Po (China-Hong Kong)
- MATSUMOTO, Jun (Japan)

### **Gender and geographical balance**

The 2024 report of the IGU Honours and Awards Committee expressed concerns about the gender and geographical imbalances in the nominations. The IGU Executive Committee has introduced the following sentence in the nomination forms for the IGU Award for Distinguished Geographical Practice and the IGU Early Career Award in Geography: *“In order to address recent imbalance in the distribution of this award, nominations of female Geographers, or those from low income countries, are especially encouraged”*.

The list of nominations in 2026 includes nine female (32%) and nineteen male (68%) candidates; the list of awardees includes four female (33%) and eight male (67%) candidates. The share of female candidates in the list of nominations and the list of awardees is substantially higher than in 2024 (with two female and twenty-two male nominations) and is in line with the gender distribution in the IGU membership in general (see Droogleever Fortuijn, 2022).

The list of nominations in 2026 reflects a geographical imbalance even higher than in 2024. Fifteen of the twenty-eight nominated candidates (54%) were from China-Beijing in 2026, compared to nine out of twenty-four (38%) in 2024. Nominated candidates came from nine different countries, world-wide. However, low-income countries are under-represented, and no nominations for candidates from African countries were submitted. We might suggest that the IGU Executive Committee invites the chairs of the IGU National Committees to actively stimulate geographers to submit nominations in a similar way as the Geographical Society of China has done in the past years.

### **Miscellaneous comments**

One of the members of the IGU Honors and Awards Committee identified inconsistencies in the formulation of the objectives of the IGU Award of Distinguished Geographical Practice and the IGU Early Career Award in Geography between the Guidelines at the one hand and the call of nominations and nomination forms 2026 at the other hand. We would suggest that the IGU Executive Committee makes a revision of the Guidelines, bringing it in line with the nomination forms.

Amsterdam, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2026

Joos Droogleever Fortuijn, chair of the IGU Honors and Awards Committee

### **Reference**

Droogleever Fortuijn, Joos (2022) Internationalisation in the International Geographical Union: Landmarks, periods and personalities. In: Vladimir Kolossov, Jacobo García Álvarez, Michael Heffernan and Bruno Schelhaas (eds.) *A geographical century: Essays for the centenary of the International Geographical Union* (p. 81-104). London, Springer Nature