

Principles for Granting Academic Honors and Awards at RWTH Aachen University

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Please note: This publication is an English translation. Only the German original of these regulations as published in the Official Announcements of RWTH Aachen University (“Amtliche Bekanntmachungen”) is legally binding.

Based on § 2 (4) of the Higher Education Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (Hochschulgesetz; HG) in the version of the announcement dated September 16, 2014 (Law and Official Gazette of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia; GV. NRW, p. 547), most recently amended by Art. 1 of the Act Concerning Further Measures to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic in Higher Education dated December 1, 2020 (GV. NRW, p. 1110), in conjunction with §2 (2) of the current version of the University Charter and Bylaws dated September 21, 2007, RWTH Aachen University (RWTH) has issued the following principles for granting academic honors and awards:

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Preamble

RWTH aims to strengthen the University community by granting honors and awards to outstanding individuals. The merits of the honoree or awardee should have a positive impact on the University's reputation.

§ 1 Types of Honors and Awards

(1) By resolution of the Senate, RWTH awards the following honors:

- the University Medal;
- the Kármán Prize;
- honorary citizen;
- the von Kaven Ring;
- honorary senator;
- the academic degree and title of "Honorary Doctor" according to the provisions in the regulations governing doctorates at each faculty.

(2) By resolution of the Rectorate, RWTH confers the following awards or honorary titles on selected individuals:

- the award of "Representative of RWTH Aachen University";
- the titles of "Senior Professor" and "JARA Senior Professor" following a positive vote by the Senate;
- the title "RWTH Lecturer";
- the title "RWTH Fellow";
- the title "RWTH Honorary Fellow";
- the title "RWTH Adjunct Professor".

§ 2 University Medal

The University Medal is awarded to members and affiliates, self-governing bodies, or student initiatives for outstanding contributions to RWTH. A nominee's longstanding service to the University or participation in the self-governing bodies is not reason alone for an award. Rather, they must demonstrate special merits that go beyond their official duties or usual participation in self-governing bodies.

§ 3 Kármán Prize

The Kármán Prize is awarded to enrolled and former RWTH students in recognition of their outstanding service to the University. It must be awarded to the individual within two years of their graduation from RWTH. Their outstanding service must be significant to RWTH as a whole. The individual must also have a good academic record. At the award ceremony, a cash prize will be presented in addition to a certificate.

§ 4 Honorary Citizens

- (1) This honor is bestowed on individuals who have made significant and lasting contributions to improving the University and its wider community.
- (2) Honorary citizens are members of RWTH and, if applicable, of the applying faculty.

§ 5 Von Kaven Ring, RWTH Ring of Honor

The von Kaven Ring is primarily awarded to external individuals who have made special contributions to the University. The von Kaven Ring may be awarded to members of RWTH if their exceptional services to the University go beyond their official duties.

§ 6 Honorary Senators

- (1) The “Honorary Senator” title shall be primarily conferred on external individuals who have rendered exceptional services to the University and have bolstered RWTH's reputation in Germany or abroad.
- (2) Honorary senators are members of RWTH and, if applicable, of the applying faculty.

§ 7 Honorary Doctorate

An honorary doctorate is conferred on individuals who can demonstrate outstanding scientific and/or creative achievements in a discipline of the respective faculty or in a related discipline, whereby they have particularly and sustainably promoted their own or a related discipline. This especially applies to individuals whose exceptional achievements were attained outside the University or academic institutions. Self-taught individuals, who, despite not having an educational background in a particular discipline, can nevertheless demonstrate outstanding achievements in such a discipline should also be considered.

The basis of the above-mentioned cases for the respective faculty is always the outstanding academic and/or creative achievement of the individual to be honored, which is either evidenced in scientific publications or otherwise publicly documented. The requesting faculty is required to document the exceptional achievements in detail so that all members of the Senate can be convinced of their significance. The expert opinions submitted by the faculty are also subject to this requirement. The prerequisite for awarding an honorary doctorate is not just the individual's outstanding scientific and/or creative achievement, rather, their entire lifework should be considered, especially in terms of social significance and impact.

§ 8 Awarding Process

- (1) In order to obtain a preliminary agreement at the University, the dean should discuss the planned honor in the Rectorate before it is discussed and decided upon in the Faculty Council.

- (2) The individual groups named in § 11 (1) HG are entitled to apply via the faculties of RWTH and the Rectorate.
- (3) The application to the Senate for the award of the University Medal, the Kármán Prize, honorary citizenship, the von Kaven Ring, or the “Honorary Senator” title shall include a report from the faculty or the Rectorate detailing the nominee's services to RWTH in addition to their CV.
- (4) The application to the Senate for awarding the academic degree and title of “Honorary Doctor” shall include:
 - the faculty’s report on the special academic and/or creative achievements of the nominee, including a suggestion for the wording on the certificate;
 - the result of the Faculty Council’s vote;
 - a general and academic CV of the nominee;
 - overviews of publications and lectures;
 - two detailed external expert opinions.

§ 9 Representative of RWTH Aachen University

- (1) The Rectorate appoints committed alumni as official representatives of RWTH. This is intended to expand the network of alumni as well as the presence of RWTH supraregionally and worldwide and help the alumni to bolster connections among each other. The award signifies RWTH's special appreciation for the graduates appointed to this position, who are particularly committed to the goals of the RWTH and the Alumni Network.
- (2) RWTH expects its representatives to:
 - maintain and expand personal connections and information exchanges between RWTH and its alumni;
 - inform RWTH about the activities of the Alumni Association and after consultation make sure they are in line with the current goals and interests of the University;
 - promote alumni networking activities;
 - expand the supraregional and worldwide presence of RWTH through high-profile measures;
 - stimulate and further develop RWTH's ties with organizations and figures from academia, business, politics, and culture all over the world.
- (3) The future cooperation with the representative and the possible support of their activities by RWTH will be recorded in an appropriate form.

§ 10 Senior Professor and JARA Senior Professor

- (1) The Rectorate may confer the honorary title of “Senior Professor” on RWTH professors after their retirement from active service in recognition of their outstanding achievements in the respective discipline. This honorary title is awarded with the expectation of further academic activity to significantly promote RWTH.

- (2) In the case of outstanding achievements in the development of JARA (the Jülich-Aachen Research Alliance), the Rectorate can confer the honorary title of “JARA Senior Professor” on university professors following their retirement from active service. The title is awarded with the expectation of continued scientific activity to significantly promote JARA.
- (3) The title is awarded upon recommendation by a faculty. In the case of the “JARA Senior Professor” title, a recommendation from the Board of Directors of Forschungszentrum Jülich is also required.
- (4) No rights or obligations are associated with the award of the honorary title.

§ 11 RWTH Lecturer

- (1) The title “RWTH Lecturer” is awarded to scholars employed at RWTH with a record of outstanding teaching activities and continued commitment to research. The Rectorate confers the award on the recommendation of the selection panel for the duration of employment or active civil service at RWTH. The vice-rector for human resources management and development presents the award.
- (2) All academic employees and civil servants of RWTH Aachen University with a doctorate and at least five years of independent teaching experience are eligible to apply. University professors and adjunct professors are excluded from applying, however.
- (3) The application must include:
 - an academic CV in tabular form;
 - teaching experience detailed in the candidate’s own words;
 - their five most important publications;
 - the text of the laudatory speech from their supervising professor. This must explicitly state the reasons for granting the applicant the award.
 - Course evaluations, such as EvaSys evaluations or equivalent evidence, may also be attached to the application.
- (4) The selection panel is comprised of the following members:
 - Vice-Rector for Human Resources Management and Development;
 - Exploratory Teaching Space Selection Panel; and
 - Representatives of the Exploratory Research Space Selection Panel.
- (5) The selection criteria are:
 - excellence in teaching as evidenced by course evaluations or other relevant information;
 - a minimum of five years of successful independent teaching experience at a university, as confirmed by the faculty;
 - personal commitment to teaching and learning;
 - commitment to research, e.g., through publications or other demonstrated scholarly accomplishments;
 - the reasons listed in the laudatory speech;
 - additional functions of the candidate at the chair may be considered.

§ 12 RWTH Fellow

- (1) The RWTH Fellow is an award for outstandingly qualified university professors at RWTH who have made a special mark in research, and have thus made an essential contribution to the success of the University. The Rectorate confers the award on the recommendation of the selection panel for the duration of employment or active civil service at RWTH. The rector or the vice-rector for human resources management and development will present the award.
- (2) The deans of RWTH are entitled to nominate candidates.
- (3) They must submit a laudatory speech with the nomination.
- (4) The selection panel is comprised of the following members:
 - Vice-Rector for Human Resources Management and Development;
 - Members of the Exploratory Research Space Selection Panel; and
 - Spokespersons from the Profile Areas Steering Committees.
- (5) The selection criteria are:
 - demonstrated scientific excellence of the researcher(s) through an exceptional research record,
 - international reputation of the researcher,
 - candidate's contribution to RWTH remaining competitive in the future and relevance of their research in terms of enhancing the University's profile,
 - "lifework" – through scientific excellence in research that has had a lasting impact on RWTH's research scene,
 - contribution in the context of service to RWTH.
- (4) The members of the selection panel make a preliminary selection. At least two external university expert opinions are obtained for the selected university professors. These are prepared by recognized experts in accordance with the DFG's expert opinion guidelines. Based on the external expert opinions, the selection panel prepares a proposal for the Rectorate.

§ 13 Honorary Fellow

- (1) In order to bolster connections with outstanding international scholars, the Rectorate can award such individuals the honorary title "Honorary Fellow". This award is both a token of appreciation and the expectation of a closer cooperation, especially in the field of teaching and learning.
- (2) Only individuals who are already a "regular" professor may be awarded the honorary title.
- (3) The Rectorate confers the award on the recommendation of the faculty.
- (4) No rights or obligations are associated with the award of the honorary title.

§ 14 Adjunct Professor

- (1) The title "Adjunct Professor" can be awarded to internationally renowned professors in order to strengthen ties with important partner universities and the awarded individual's ties to RWTH.
- (2) The Rectorate confers the award on a faculty's recommendation based on a Faculty Council resolution that is submitted with three expert opinions from three RWTH professors.
- (3) In principle, the adjunct professor must be a "full professor" at a prestigious university and have an excellent research record.
- (4) The adjunct professor undertakes to be available to RWTH for an appropriate period of time and to contribute to teaching and research (e.g. by holding a block lecture or a workshop with young scholars).
- (5) The "Adjunct Professor" title is awarded for a period of three to five years and may be renewed by the Rectorate upon approval by the participating faculty.
- (6) No rights or obligations are associated with the award of the honorary title.

§ 15 Withdrawal of Honors or Awards

An award or honorary title or may be withdrawn if

- a. it subsequently transpires that the honor was acquired by deception,
or
- b. essential requirements for the award were erroneously assumed to be met,
or
- c. if the honoree conducts themselves in a way that is likely to damage the reputation of RWTH.

The Senate or the Rectorate takes the decision regarding the withdrawal.

§ 16 Entry Into Force

These Regulations are published in the official announcements of RWTH Aachen University (“Amtliche Bekanntmachungen”) and enter into force on the day after publication.

Issued based on the resolutions of the Senate of RWTH Aachen University from December 10, 2020.

It is pointed out that, in accordance with § 12 (5) NRW HG, any claims regarding a violation of procedural or formal requirements of the regulatory or other autonomous rights of the University may no longer be asserted after one year has elapsed since the official publication of this announcement unless:

- 1) the announcement has not been properly published,
- 2) the Rectorate has objected, prior to publication, to the decision of the committee adopting the regulations,
- 3) the University has been previously notified about the defect of form or of procedure in a complaint, specifying the infringed legal provision and the fact which gives rise to the defect, or
- 4) the legal consequence of the exclusion of complaints was not pointed out in the public announcement.

The Rector
of RWTH Aachen University

Aachen, December 17, 2020

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