

Nominating a University of Toronto Honorary Degree Recipient

Frequently Asked Questions

- Why does the University of Toronto (U of T) encourage nominations of honorary degree recipients?

Through example, honorary degree recipients provide **inspiration and leadership** to the graduates of the University. In accepting an honorary degree, renowned individuals who have achieved extraordinary accomplishments bring honour and distinction to the University.

- Who can submit a nomination?

Nominations may be submitted by **anyone**. You don't need to be a U of T alumnus/a, faculty, staff, or student, although members of those groups may be especially interested in identifying outstanding nominees who reflect the diversity of the University. Individuals external to the University are strongly encouraged to consider partnering with an academic unit within the University when preparing a nomination package. It is also recommended that nominators contact the [Secretary of the Committee for Honorary Degrees](#) for advice before beginning the process.

- How many letters of support should be provided?

While letters of support are not required, it is suggested that lead nominators consider including two or three letters of support as part of the [nomination package](#). It is recommended that those being asked to provide letters are individuals whose local, national, or international profile is significant and who are in a position to address the quality and level of impact of the nominee. The excellence of the nomination package is determined by the calibre of the information provided. This may be conveyed in a modest package; large packages with significant numbers of letters and supporting documents are not recommended.

- What is the deadline for submitting a nomination?

Nominations are accepted on an **ongoing basis** throughout the year. However, the deadline to submit nominations for the subsequent year is normally the second Friday of each September. Please see the [nomination instructions](#) for specific deadline and return details.

- Who are past honorary degree recipients?

Recipients represent a range of disciplines and backgrounds. Their community, national, or global involvement is noteworthy, and their **excellent** achievements are easily identified by their peers and the broader community. The list of [recipients from 1850 to the present](#) will provide a sense of the range of individuals who have been honoured.

- What are the responsibilities of an honorary degree recipient?

An honorary degree recipient is normally expected to attend a **Convocation ceremony** for the conferral of the degree within two years of receiving an offer from the President. As well, the recipient usually is asked to address the graduands at the ceremony. Recipients may also be invited to participate in activities sponsored by an academic division of the University, such as seminars, lectures, student receptions, etc.

- How is a decision made in developing a short list of honorary degree nominees?

The [Committee for Honorary Degrees](#) takes into account a number of factors when evaluating nominations that have been received. Some questions which are considered include the following: How distinguished is the nominee in a field of highly accomplished peers? How far-reaching is the nominee's impact/contribution? To which category of nominations does the recipient belong? (e.g. excellence in the academy or professions, outstanding service for the public good, outstanding service to the nation, etc.) Such questions are used to help guide the Committee's confidential deliberations.

- When are decisions made about the selection of honorary degree recipient?

Each December, the Committee for Honorary Degrees normally recommends to the [Governing Council](#) a list of proposed honorary degree recipients. The names of those individuals who have agreed to accept an honorary degree are typically made public each **February**.

If you have any other questions not answered here, please contact the [Secretary of the Committee for Honorary Degrees](#).