

Award Rules

The Swiss Transplantation Society (STS) will distribute 2 awards, financially supported by Astellas Pharma AG, at the STS Annual Meeting in Thun, January 2026: The **STS Excellence Award 2025** and the **STS Innovation Award 2025**. An independent jury of experts will elect 2 award winners among eligible candidates who may be surgeons, physicians or other persons active in translational transplantation research as well as clinical practice within Switzerland. The Excellence Award shall be conferred to a person in the middle of his/her career, below 55 years of age, whereas the Innovation Award shall be conferred to a younger candidate, ≤ 40 years of age, with outstanding future potential. The winners will be awarded as the representatives of a research group or project for outstanding scientific and/or clinical achievements within the thematic focus of the *STS Excellence Award 2025* and *STS Innovation Award 2025*.

STS Excellence Award 2025 and STS Innovation Award 2025

For the sixth time, the STS will again confer 2 awards, one *STS Excellence Award*, endowed with CHF 20'000.- and one *STS Innovation Award* with CHF 10'000.-. Based on age limits, candidates will automatically qualify for the *STS Excellence Award* only (age > 40 and < 55 years) or for both, the *STS Innovation* and the *STS Excellence Award* (age ≤ 40 years). The same rules described below otherwise apply for all candidates. All candidates will be evaluated based on the same criteria, as detailed under 10.a) to 10.f). For the *STS Excellence Award* all criteria will be weighted equally. However, for the *STS Innovation Award* criteria 10.b), 10.c) and 10.d) will be double-weighted.

Eligible Candidates

1. An eligible candidate must fulfill the following criteria:
 - a) Researcher – this may be a surgeon, physician or any other person active in clinical practice – currently active in preclinical or clinical transplantation research in Switzerland. No minimum research activity in Switzerland is required, but main research activity for evaluation is – at least partially – performed within Switzerland
 - b) Principal investigator, research group head or researcher with leading role in a research project
 - c) Under 55 years of age as of 31 December 2025 to be eligible for the Excellence Award
 - d) ≤ 40 years of age as of 31 December 2025 to be eligible for the Innovation and Excellence Award
2. Eligible candidates include persons who have been nominated for a previous STS Excellence Award (formerly known as Astellas Swiss Transplant Award), but did not win. Only previous award winners are excluded from being nominated again.

Valid Nominations

3. Candidates must be nominated by a scientific or transplantation-oriented senior colleague (= nominator). Self-nominations are not allowed and will not be considered. The candidates may be informed about their nomination.
4. A nominator can nominate a maximum of 2 eligible candidates. Nominators may represent an institution, e.g., university department or major agency funding research.

5. A nominator must possess detailed knowledge about the candidate's and the respective research group's or project's work and research achievements.
6. The nominator must submit to the STS a complete nomination information and documentation until **Friday, October 31, 2025**. This includes:
 - a) Full candidate and nominator information using the **Nomination Form**
 - b) Recent Curriculum Vitae (CV) of the candidate, which shall include:
 - (i) Approx. ½ page about his/her future 5-year research/career plan
 - (ii) Information on the number of trained students, researchers and/or clinicians
 - (iii) H-index (= Hirsch number) of the candidate: cumulative and for the last 5 years
 - (iv) List of publications (co-)authored by candidate, including citation scores; grouped into peer-reviewed, non-peer-reviewed, primary research, and secondary research (e.g., comments, reviews) publications
 - (v) List of research funding received, summed up and grouped according to funding source (e.g., foundation, industry) and type (e.g., grants, awards)
 - c) Letter of support written, dated and signed by the nominator. The letter of support shall emphasize on 2 pages the scientific and/or clinical achievements of the candidate and the respective research group or project relevant to the *STS Innovation Award 2025* and/or the *STS Excellence Award 2025*. The past, current and potential contributions to the Swiss transplant field shall be highlighted.
 - d) List of top 3 publications most relevant to the *STS Innovation Award 2025* and/or the *STS Excellence Award 2025*, including their respective Impact Factor.
 - (i) Publications may be primary research or review articles.
 - (ii) The candidate must be an either first (or shared first) or last (or shared last) author on all three publications.
 - (iii) Publications must have been accepted for publication between 1st January 2021 and 30th September 2025 in peer-reviewed journals.
 - e) Any other information if applicable. In case a manuscript accepted for publication is listed as one of the top 3 publications, this manuscript shall be submitted.
7. Nomination submissions must be sent via e-mail to STS to office@swisstransplantationsociety.com or nicole@meetingcom.ch

Evaluation of Nominations

8. An independent jury of international and national transplantation experts including 1 jury president is elected by the STS.
9. Jury members cannot evaluate nominations of their own institution or university.
10. The independent jury will evaluate the submitted valid nominations on a scale from 1-5 (1 = worst, 5 = best) for each of the following criteria:
 - a) Alignment with scope of award, i.e. potential for improvements for patient management and outcomes in solid organ transplantation, with emphasis on translational research (e.g., organ shortage, donor management, novel immunosuppressive therapies / biomarkers, technological

- innovations, surgical / non-surgical interventions, observational / interventional transplantation research) within Switzerland
- b) Scientific quality, in particular with an impact on the patient management and the transplant community within Switzerland
 - c) Innovative potential and novelty
 - d) National and international future scientific and/or clinical impact of research achievements
 - e) Contribution to Swiss transplant field to date, primarily based on candidate's CV information
 - f) Research group leading potential, including capacity to acquire research funding and, if applicable, potential to have own research group in future
11. For the Excellence Award, criteria 10.a) to 10.f) are weighted equally.
 12. For the Innovation Award, criteria 10.b), 10.c), 10.d) are double-weighted
 13. The jury president shall identify the 2 top scoring nominations for both awards, based on mean values.
 14. The 2 top scoring nominations for both awards shall be discussed amongst the jury members. The jury shall elect 1 winner for each of the 2 awards by consensus. In exceptional cases, a majority voting may be applied.

Awarding

15. At least 2 weeks before the award ceremony, the winners shall be confidentially informed by the jury president, a jury member or an STS board member about his winning of the *STS Excellence Award 2025* or the *STS Innovation Award 2025*.
16. The winners or, if unable to attend, a representative of the winning research group or project shall present the scientific and/or clinical achievements for which the awards are distributed within the program of the STS Annual Meeting in Thun, on **January 22-23, 2026**.
17. After the winner presentation, the STS Excellence Award 2025 and the STS Innovation Award 2025 shall be distributed officially to the winners by a Jury and a STS board member.
18. Astellas Pharma AG shall transfer the prize money of CHF 20'000.- for the *STS Excellence Award* and CHF 10'000.- for the *STS Innovation Award* to STS in advance and based on a contract between Astellas Pharma AG and STS. STS shall transfer the prize money to the winner's institution or department. The prize money must be used for ongoing and future research.

Role of Astellas Pharma AG

19. Astellas Pharma AG is fully granting the *STS Excellence Award 2024* and the *STS Innovation Award 2024*. The awards shall not influence in any way the prescribing behavior of health care professionals (HCPs).
20. Astellas Pharma AG is not part of the award jury and thus does not evaluate nominations.

Swiss Transplantation Society's Expectation for Award Winners

21. In addition to the existing criteria, the STS wishes that candidates nominated for the award commit to applying for STS membership. While they do not need to be members at the time of application, they should be open to joining the society afterward.