

STAR Achievement Awards: Best Practices

The Staff Appreciation and Recognition Plan (the “STAR Plan”) cash recognition awards are discretionary and may be awarded to employees for the purpose of recognizing and rewarding excellence in University service; significant achievements and contributions; and individual and team performance.

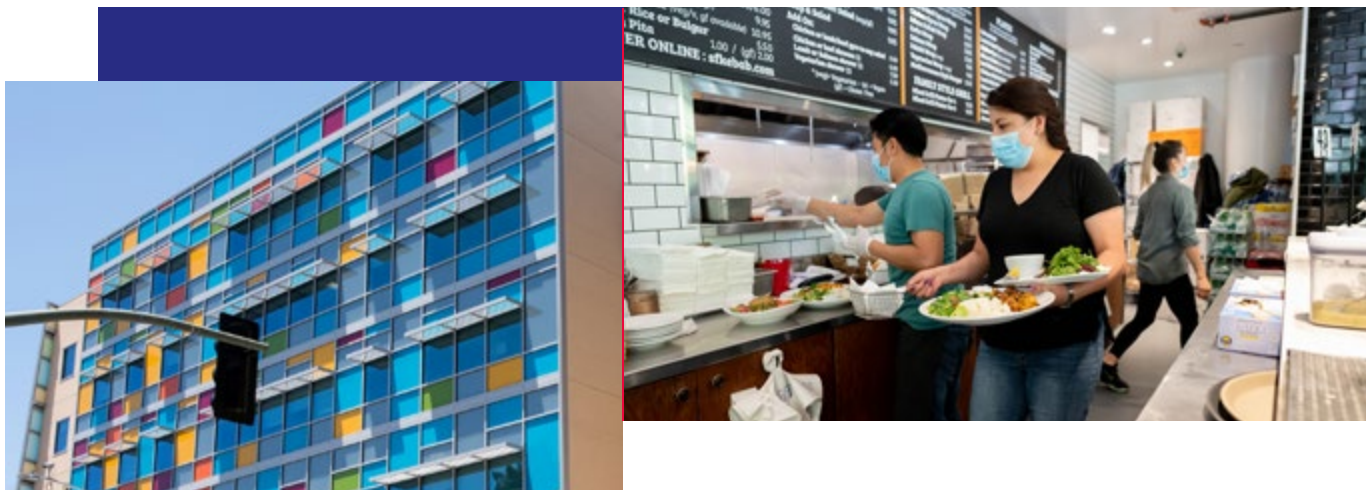
Eligibility Requirements for Nomination

Any staff, non-faculty academic, or faculty member can nominate an eligible employee for a STAR award. In addition, an employee outside of the SOM could submit a nomination for a SOM employee.

UCSF staff in policy-covered titles (MSP and PSS) and staff within the CX bargaining unit are eligible for program (“eligible employees”) as long as they meet the following criteria, at the time of payout:

- Must hold a career position (payroll code- appointment type “2”); or a contract position (payroll code- appointment type “1”) at 50 percent or more time for a duration of six months or more; or a limited position (payroll code- appointment type “4”)
- Must have 6 months of continuous service at UCSF
- Completion of probationary period where applicable.
- Satisfactory performance rating on most recent performance evaluation. (PPSM 23 requires that written performance evaluations be completed annually.) Employees who have not yet received an annual performance evaluation may be eligible for an award if their manager confirms on the nomination form that performance is satisfactory or better.
- On active pay status or approved unpaid leave at UCSF on the date that the cash payment is made.
- Does not participate in the clinical incentive program (CEMRP2) or another type of incentive award program.
- Transfers:
 - Intra transfers (transfer from one UCSF department to another UCSF department) would still be eligible, because the employee still works for UCSF.
 - Inter transfers (transfer from another campus/location to UCSF) and the employee does not have a break in service, then employee is eligible if the above criteria are met.

Participation in the Program for any Program Period does not provide any right or guarantee to participate in the Program for any subsequent Program Period.



Nomination Checklist

□ All eligibility criteria is met

- Nominee is a: policy-covered career PSS employee, MSP employee, or exclusively represented employees in the Clerical Unit (CX).
- Nominee is on active pay status or on an approved unpaid leave.
- Nominee has a performance rating of Successfully Meets Expectations or better overall rating on their most recent annual performance evaluation. (PPSM 23 requires that written performance evaluations be completed annually.) New employees who have not yet received an annual performance evaluation may be eligible for an award if their manager confirms on the nomination form that they are “successfully meeting expectations” and attaches a written review of performance.
- Nominee has worked on a specific project or event that is above and beyond the normal scope of his/her regular job scope.

□ Your nomination creates a unique verbal picture of your nominee and their accomplishments

- Describe unique characteristics that are more than just that the nominee is a great or nice person. Avoid sweeping generalities.
- Selection Committee members are relying on your words to give them a positive, factual picture of your nominee’s accomplishments. Explaining detailed behaviors and giving specific examples will make it obvious why someone deserves to be recognized.
- Support the nomination with your own observations, as well as qualitative and quantitative facts, statistics, metrics, etc.
- Provide a complete overview of the nominee or team’s accomplishment. It is important to tell the nominee’s story as you would to a stranger. Avoid using jargon.
- Keep it brief. Avoid giving work history or job descriptions, unless it directly relates to the award criteria. The goal is quality, not quantity.

□ Your nomination recognizes an activity or project that is complete

- If the project is still being developed or has not produced results, consider identifying major milestones completed and the impact to the overall outcome. If this progress is not of substantial impact, consider waiting to submit the nomination until after the results/impact can be documented and supported.
- Be sure to include unusual challenges the nominee had to overcome.
- Describe the amount of time and resources spent on the project (e.g., if the project is on time or early, at or under budget)

- **The accomplishment (performance standard) that is being recognized reflects at least one of the Chancellor’s Goals and/or the UCSF PRIDE Values**

Criteria	Definition	Framed as a Question
Performance Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional Performance • Creativity • Organizational Abilities • Work success • Teamwork 	How does the nominee specifically demonstrate performance standard(s)?
Chancellor’s Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster Innovation • Build Value-Added Partnerships • Bolster Financial Resiliency • Nurture UCSF’s Culture and Empower Its People 	Has the nominee demonstrated the Chancellor’s Goals and/or UCSF PRIDE Values?
UCSF PRIDE Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism • Respect • Integrity • Diversity • Excellence 	

- **All information in your nomination is verified**

- Nominations should be checked carefully to verify that all information submitted is accurate.
- Ensure that all acronyms are spelled out and are correctly defined.

- **Duplicate nominations are coordinated**

- If more than one person is nominating an individual for the same accomplishment, nominators are encouraged to coordinate and co-sign one nomination, if possible.
- Multiple nominations are allowed for an individual for separate and distinct accomplishments.



FAQ

What is the STAR Program?

The Staff Appreciation and Recognition Program (called the “STAR Program”) is a cash recognition program designed to recognize and reward excellence in University service, significant achievements and contributions, and/or outstanding individual and team performance.

How does the STAR Program work?

STAR Achievement Awards for “substantial change over time”: recognize sustained, exceptional performance and/or significant contributions from an employee(s) over an extended period of time. The contribution that is being recognized at the Achievement Award level must reflect at least one of the Chancellor’s Goals and/or the UCSF PRIDE Values. Prize amount is \$5,000, or up to 10% of base salary, whichever is lower.

What are examples of contributions deserving of a STAR Achievement Award?

- *External Relations Specialist conceives, designs, and implements an innovative method to identify and contact alumni who have a high probability of supporting UCSF, with significant impact for both fundraising and political support for the campus.*
- *Student Services Advisor leads the design and implementation of a program that develops valuable information, streamlines processes and systems for supporting students and their well-being. This work is not only enthusiastically adopted by the Campus, but has become a go-to model of the UC System as a whole.*
- *An employee’s process plans, re-engineering of their workflow or a program/project process results in major cost savings to their department and/or school at large.*
- *Special Projects Cross-Department and/ or Cross-Control Points projects that have a shared common objective or goal. These types of projects can include multifunctional databases, shared resources e.g., cross collaboration to achieve a mission/plan of action.*

- *Completion of a special project which results in a significant positive impact to the campus community.*

Who is eligible for the STAR Program?

Campus policy-covered staff (PSS and MSP) and represented staff in the clerical (CX) bargaining unit are eligible for the new STAR Program. Additional information on program eligibility can be found [here](#).

How will the awardees be selected in the School of Medicine?

All nominations are reviewed by multiple members of a review committee, comprising staff, managers and faculty representing diverse functional areas.

Could an employee receive both an Achievement and a Spot Award?

An employee could receive both awards as long as the combination of both awards does not exceed 10% of salary or \$10,000, whichever amount is lower and as long each award is for a different accomplishment. With that said, control points and HR will provide regular auditing to ensure compliance requirements are followed in award allocation.

Is it possible to get a Spot and Achievement Award for the same accomplishment?

No. An employee may not receive a SPOT Award and an Achievement Award for the same accomplishment.

Can STAR Awards be used to recognize team efforts?

Yes, they can. If you are giving a Spot Award or Achievement Award to a project team, the full amount will be given to each project team member. The Award is not split or distributed among project team members.

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FAQ

Can the department or divisions supplement the \$5,000 Achievement Award or \$1000 Spot Award amounts with additional funds if they are available?

No. The award funds may not be supplemented by department or division funds. In addition, the Spot Award and Achievement Award budgets cannot be moved between programs. The funds/budget for each program (Spot or Achievement) stay within each program.

When do awardees receive payment?

For Achievement Awards, there are two cycles. SOM only participates in the Spring cycle that is typically paid in June of the current fiscal year. Please see [STAR payment calendar](#).

Who can nominate deserving staff members?

Anyone. Supervisors will be consulted on their support for all nominations.

How are the Achievement Awards funded?

The program is funded by a payroll assessment of eligible populations. Funds are distributed to the Control Points on the basis of the eligible population. The assessment comes from the employee's funding sources. It is not paid for by the employee.

Can a department implement additional restrictions on award eligibility such as only allowing awards to be given to an employee every other year?

No. [UCSF STAR Administrative Guidelines](#) were reviewed by all control points, HR leadership and UC Office of the President. Control points and departments must follow the approved eligibility requirements for both the Spot and Achievement awards.

Can a campus department or unit offer a non-cash award which is available for all employees?

Yes, a campus unit may offer a non-cash award valued at \$75 or less to any employee and this would be separate from the STAR award program. The criteria for the award may be established by the campus unit. The non-cash award (gift certificate or card, merchandise etc.) must be valued at \$75 or less so the employee does not incur any taxes, unlike the campus-wide Spot Award or Achievement award which is taxed). Reference from: [University of California Employee Non-Cash Awards and Other Gifts Policy BFB-G-4](#) (pages 3-5).

Selection Criteria for Eligible Staff

The STAR Achievement Awards recognize sustained, exceptional performance and/or significant contributions from an employee(s) over an extended period of time.

Under the STAR Plan, anyone can nominate eligible staff who exhibit exceptional performance and/or significant contributions related to and supportive of individual, departmental, divisional, and/or organizational goals and objectives. Eligible individuals and teams should demonstrate:

- **Exceptional performance:** Demonstrated and sustained exceptional performance that consistently exceeds goals and work expectations in quantity and/or quality
- **Creativity:** One-time innovation or creation that results in time/dollar savings, revenue enhancement, and productivity improvement; and/or ongoing innovative/creative activities that benefit organizational systems, protocols, and/or procedures
- **Organizational abilities:** Exhibiting extraordinary skills in leadership resulting in the accomplishment of significant departmental or divisional goals and objectives; effective project management, which could include developing a project and/or implementing a project with substantial success; and/or demonstrating organizational capability leading to a greater level of effectiveness
- **Work success:** Significantly exceeding productivity, customer service, quality of care or similar goals, including demonstrating superior interactions with managers, peers, supervisors, subordinates, the University community, and/or clients and customers served
- **Teamwork:** Acting as an exceptionally effective and cooperative team member or team leader for a team that has significantly exceeded the goals/objectives of the department/unit.



Eligible staff must reflect at least one of the Chancellor's Goals and/or embody the UCSF PRIDE Values:

- **Chancellor's Goals** – Foster Innovation, Build Value-Added Partnerships, Bolster Financial Resiliency, Nurture UCSF's Culture and Empower Its People, and/or
- **UCSF PRIDE Values**
 - Professionalism* – how we conduct ourselves, and our business
 - Respect* – for our patients, families, ourselves, and each other
 - Integrity* – always doing the honest, right thing
 - Diversity* – understanding and embracing the diverse beliefs, needs and expectations of our patients, community, and employees
 - Excellence* – what we strive for in everything we do.

A written nomination describing the nominee's contributions to the SOM must be submitted via the STAR Online Portal. Achievement Awards are administered through a SOM-wide process with selection committees which include staff, supervisory and faculty representation. Prize amount is \$5,000, or up to 10% of base salary, whichever is lower.