

Proposal for ACM-W Athena Lectures

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ACM-W proposes the creation of an annual “Athena Lecture,” to be presented at an ACM-sponsored meeting to an active women computer science researcher. The Athena Lecture will honor women who have made fundamental contributions to computer science research. ACM-sponsored meetings will propose potential speakers; the chosen speaker will give a one-hour talk at the ACM meeting that proposed the speaker.

- Logistics: ACM-W will sponsor an annual competition in which all ACM-sponsored meetings will be eligible to apply for the “Athena Lectureship”; the winner will give a talk at the ACM-sponsored meeting. All expenses, including travel, an honorarium and an engraved vase, will be covered by ACM.

The intent is to keep logistics simple. The competition will be announced to the program and conference chairs of all ACM-sponsored meetings; there will be information about the Athena Lectures on the ACM-W website. The application will be a single-page outline of the nominee’s contribution to research computer science, including a listing of her most important work, and providing links to her papers and projects. A committee consisting of research computer scientists chosen by ACM-W will determine the winner.

- Costs: Costs will be approximately \$4100 annually, \$2500 for travel expenses, \$1500 for the honoraria, and \$100 for the engraved vase. We hope that an industry sponsor can be found for this program. At least initially, however, costs will be borne by ACM.

- Value: This competition will highlight the contributions of women in research. It will have the effect of encouraging the various subfields of computer science to think about their active women contributors. We believe that the process of identifying these eminent women will have the additional side effect of increasing the chances that various of the meetings will choose to select these women to give invited talks, *regardless of whether those women have been chosen as “Athena Lecturers.”* Over time, the Athena Lecturers will provide a pool of highly visible eminent women researchers, providing the added benefit of highly visible role models and mentors.
- Publicity: We would like to leverage this event so as to increase the visibility of women in research computer science. Possibilities include publication of the talk in CACM, a web page devoted to the Athena Lectures, and similar publicity to increase awareness of the recipients outstanding achievements.

Athena is the Greek goddess of wisdom, who sprang fully-grown and fully-armed from the head of Zeus. We believe that Athena, with her wisdom and sense of purpose, her willingness to enter the fray, epitomizes the strength, sense of purpose, and intelligence of the women scholars who will be the “Athena Lecturers.”