

Frequently Asked Questions About the Radio Club of America

1. **What is the Radio Club of America?** A: The Radio Club of America is the world's oldest professional society for persons involved in the wireless industry.
2. **Why is it called a 'club'?** A: the use of the word club is from RCA's early origins, when a group of teenaged wireless operators in the very early days of wireless (1909) decided to form an organization to exchange ideas and information about wireless.
3. **Do you have to be a licensed radio amateur (ham radio operator) in order to join RCA?**
A: No. In fact only about 63% of our members are radio amateurs. RCA is in no way an organization for radio amateurs – that organization is the American Radio Relay League (ARRL). However, many members got their first taste of wireless via amateur radio, and some of our members continue in that hobby. For those that are amateurs, we do have two events annually when those members can contact other RCA members who are amateurs in a "QSO Party". Information on this is available on the RCA Web site.

Also RCA's Youth Program has for the past 30 years used amateur radio to get school-aged youth interested in wireless and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) subjects leading to possible future career choices.

4. **Is RCA an amateur radio club?** A: No, see answer to #3 above.
5. **What sorts of people join RCA?** A: RCA has members in many vertical industries within wireless: antennas, broadcast for TV and radio, cellular communications, consulting, land mobile radio, manufacturing, military communications, public safety communications, radio astronomy, satellite communications, semiconductors for wireless, tower structures, and many more. Additionally RCA members perform many job functions within those vertical industries, including: engineering, inventors, management, marketing, publishing, sales, technicians, and many others.
6. **Do I have to have a sponsor in order to join RCA?** A: For many years, RCA required candidates for membership to be sponsored by one or two RCA members. That requirement has since been relaxed, and persons with an interest in RCA may apply for membership even if they don't have an RCA sponsor. However, we still prefer that if you know an RCA member, you ask them to sponsor you.

7. **Why should I join RCA? I am already a member of XYZ organization that serves my wireless industry vertical.** A: RCA is a broad-based society of wireless industry professionals. There is much one can learn from professionals in other industry verticals within wireless, but you will only get to meet people outside your vertical through an organization such as RCA which has members from all industry verticals.
8. **What is the main focus of RCA?** A: RCA has three foci: the future, the present, and the past.

For the future focus, it is well known that fewer and fewer young people are going into wireless, especially in the technical areas such as engineering. For 30 years, RCA alone has pioneered the approach to the youth of America, in middle school and in high school, to get them interested in wireless, using the medium of amateur radio. In addition, RCA has had for decades a scholarship program to assist college-aged youth to attend universities and study engineering, broadcast, or similar wireless related subjects.

In the present, RCA assists members with their careers. Through periodic vertical industry trade events, RCA has a booth or hosts a reception for members to network. At our annual Technical Symposium and Awards Banquet, additional time to network and discuss wireless issues is afforded our members. In the members only section of the RCA Website is a current list of all members with their email addresses, to further facilitate networking. Additionally, RCA has embarked on providing educational and training opportunities to members. This includes our annual Technical Symposium, where professional engineers (PEs) and others needing continuing education can get CEU credits. Also, those not able to attend the Technical Symposium in person, can view the presentations live when they are given, or go the RCA Channel on YouTube to see the videos archived. Presenters' slide decks are available on the RCA Website for several years after they have been presented, to provide a resource for researchers. Some of our partners (such as the Electronic Technicians Association - ETA) provide technical training. Finally, we are working on providing other technical training via Webinars and electronic publications.

RCA has also placed a focus on women in wireless, because they are under-represented in the industry. The Vivian Carr award was specifically created to honor such women. On RCA Website (<http://radioclubofamerica.org/wireless-women/>) will be found a lot of resource material for both girls and women interested in a career in wireless. In the

members only section of the RCA Website are many of the recent issues of the Proceedings and the Aerogram.

RCA also honors the past. Many of the industry's leading notables have been members, including Armstrong, Beverage, Cooper, Kahn, Link, Poppele, and many others. Many of RCA's awards honor some of those pioneers. On the RCA Website is a link to RCA's wireless pioneers, present and past: <https://www.radioclubofamerica.org/rcas-wireless-pioneers/>

9. **RCA gives out many awards each year at its Annual Awards Banquet in November. Do I have to be an RCA member to receive an award?** A: As shown on the RCA Website (<http://radioclubofamerica.org/about-us/awards/>), presently only 6 awards are available to RCA members only. The vast majority (16 presently) are available to be given to both non-RCA members as well as RCA members.
10. **It seems that each year only a few awards are given out. Why don't you award all 22 awards each year?** A: RCA's Awards Committee each year makes the final selection of award recipients, based on input from both RCA members and non-members suggesting suitable candidates. The forms for nominating a candidate are found at http://radioclubofamerica.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/2017_RCA_AwardNominationForm.pdf The Awards Committee ensures that the candidate meets all of the criteria required for the award. If the committee feels that a candidate doesn't meet the criteria, or no one is nominated for some of the awards in a particular year, then no award is made. It is RCA's intention to make the criteria high to get an award, and to not 'over award' so that the awards are meaningful within the wireless industry.
11. **I heard I was nominated for an award, but I was not chosen. Why is that?** A: In some cases, multiple candidates are nominated, and the Awards Committee has the difficult decision to decide among several candidates. If the person who nominated you originally is so moved, they may of course nominate you again in a future year.

12. **Why does RCA have partner organizations?** A: Because RCA appeals to a wide swath of vertical industries within wireless, RCA cannot provide in-depth coverage of every vertical segment. There exist in most of the wireless industry verticals, organizations that specifically serve those verticals. RCA therefore has chosen to partner with many of those vertical organizations to provide more benefit to the members of both organizations. A list of our partners can be found at <https://www.radioclubofamerica.org/partners/>