

CAPA Competition Policy and Procedures

Authority for Policy & Procedures

The updated CAPA Bylaw No. 1 (2023) provides specific details which relate to the management of photo competitions and states:

6.06 Program Directors

The Board may designate from time-to-time such areas of major program and service responsibilities as it deems necessary and may have Program Directors responsible respectively to manage such areas pursuant to delegated authorities from the Board.

Without prescribing or limiting the Board's decision on such areas of major program and service responsibilities, it may wish to consider the following:

(b) Director of Competitions - manages all aspects of Corporation competitions.

Board Approval

On (September 16, 2024), the Board of Directors reviewed and approved this Competition Policy and Procedures document.

Introduction

This document has been established to ensure fair, transparent, and consistent processes for all Association competitions.

The policy and procedures outlined in this document apply to all competitions and salons managed by the Association, whether judging occurs live or remotely.

Definitions

"AI-generative image" refers to an image which has been created using artificial intelligence generative technology, such as text-to-image and/or a photograph enhanced with AI generative features.

"Association" refers to the Canadian Association for Photographic Art which is a federally registered Canada Not-for-profit Corporation.

"Competition cycle" refers to the period encompassing the Association's zone and national competitions, which begins in September and concludes in June of the following year.

“Director” refers to the individual elected by the membership to the position of Director of Competitions.

“Disqualify an Image” refers to the removal of an image from a competition without the possibility of appeal.

“Photographic image” is defined as being a captured image on a light-sensitive device (e.g. film camera, digital camera, smartphone, tablet, etc...) and recorded on film or in a digital format.

“President” refers to the President of the Association.

“Rescind an award” refers to a process of revoking a previously granted award, thereby nullifying the image’s award designation.

“Salon” refers to an international photography competition hosted by an organization, open to both members of the hosting Association and non-members to submit entries for judging and awards.

“Temporary Association Member” refers to an individual who is not a member in good standing with the Association. They are granted temporary access for the sole purpose of judging a specific competition or salon. Upon completion of the judging assignment, the Temporary Association Member’s access is terminated and their account deleted.

“Withdraw of image” refers to an image which the Director has identified that fails to meet the scope of a competition and/or the CAPA Eligibility Criteria webpage.

Policy

Photographer’s Copyright Protection and Rights

1. All photographic images taken by a photographer remain the intellectual property of the respective photographer and retain their copyright.
2. By virtue of submitting an image into a competition or salon, the photographer asserts and agrees that the Association:
 - a. Accepts no liability for any breach of copyright or trademark by the photographer.
 - b. Is permitted to use and reproduce their copyright-protected image for non-commercial purposes such as: exhibitions, publications, promotions and for educational purposes.

- c. Will seek the photographers permission prior to including their image, if selected, in the annual international Four Nations competition or other photo competitions.
3. Any potential copyright infringement incidents relating to the Association's use of an image should be reported by the photographer to the President.

Conflict of Interest

1. All individuals managing or coordinating our photo competition or salon must
 - a. act impartial and fair, making their decisions based solely on the merits of the entries and established criteria, without favoritism or bias, or expectations of reward.
 - b. not personally receive any gift from an entrant into a competition or sponsor.
2. All reports of potential conflicts of interest or violations of policy should be reported to the President.

Infractions

Minor Infractions

1. **Withdraw an image**
 - a. An Image may be withdrawn before, during, or shortly after judging if:
 - Non-compliance with competition specifications, editing criteria and/or Eligibility Criteria webpage.
 - Failure to provide unedited files within one week upon request.
 - Previously received a CAPA Award for the submitted image(s).
 - Did not comply with the competition's editing criteria.
 - Image(s) has previously received a CAPA Award.
2. **Procedures**
 - a. Director to inform the entrant that their image has been withdrawn from the competition and their right to appeal this decision to the President.

Major Infractions

1. Series infractions include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Misrepresentation (e.g. claiming an AI-generated image as a photograph)
 - b. Plagiarism
 - c. Repeated infractions in our competitions
2. **Rescind an award** if it is verified that the entrant:
 - a. Plagiarized another work.
 - b. Generated the image using a Generative-AI text-to-image model.
 - c. Incorporated generative-AI elements into a submitted image.
 - d. Attempted to influence a competition judge
3. **Procedure for Major Infraction**
 - a. A documented report of the infraction will be presented to the Board of Directors.
 - b. If verified and agreed to by the majority of the Board member, impose one or more sanction:
 - Issuing a written reprimand
 - suspension from the association for a defined period
 - revocation of association membership.
4. The President will communicate the Board's decision to the entrant.
5. The Board's decision on major infractions cannot be appealed.

Procedures

Competition Planning and Administration

The Director will:

1. Prepare and present a comprehensive competition-salon budget for the upcoming calendar year to the Board by early November, ensuring fiscal responsibility and alignment with the Association's priorities.
2. Adhere strictly to the approved budgetary limits, promptly notify the Finance Committee of any deviations for review and guidance.
3. Submit a preliminary schedule of planned competitions for the next Competition Cycle to the Board no later than the beginning of November annually, allowing ample time for review, feedback, and approval.
4. Define the scope and editing criteria for each approved competition, collaborating closely with the webmaster to ensure all competition details for the next Competition Cycle are posted on Association's website by April 1, each year.
5. Ensure all the required competition databases and upload webpages are established within the online judging system.
6. Promote the new competitions through the Association's monthly newsletter, social media and magazine.
7. Communicate any changes or updates regarding the Eligibility Criteria webpage, competition details, and Question & Answer webpage via monthly newsletters, competition news webpage and social media platforms.
8. Establish temporary competition sub-committees or advisory groups to fulfill the following roles:
 - a. Technical configuration of an online judging system.
 - b. Assist with the management of a specific competition or salon.
 - c. Pre-screen images submitted into competitions.
 - d. Provide specialized expertise to addressing specific competition related issues.

9. Conduct a post-evaluation review after each competition or salon, to identify potential enhancements to ensure the continued success and growth by making revisions to:
 - a. Competition or salon narrative.
 - b. Eligibility Criteria webpage.
 - c. Competitions Policies and Procedures document.
- d. Seek the Board's approval to amend the Competition Policy and Procedures document.
- e. Maintain transparent communication with the Board, promptly informing them of any cancellations, postponements, date changes, or other significant updates related to a specific competition.

General

The Director will:

1. Maintain close coordination with the President to seek their suggestion to promptly address emerging issues or challenges related to competitions.
2. Exercise the authority to modify competition details, ensuring transparency and accountability by consulting with the President or their designated representative beforehand.
3. Serve as the point of contact for all competition participants and judges, offering responses or inquiries, clarification, and guidance as needed.
4. Designate the English version as the authoritative reference in cases of discrepancies or disagreement between translations, ensuring clarity and consistency in communication.
5. Prioritize bilingual email communication by responding in the language of the original inquiry (English or French).
6. Ensure strict adherence to the competition specifications and Eligibility Criteria webpage.
7. Arrange for an independent review of the competition tabulations prior to finalizing the competition results.
8. Compile the final competition report and organize the distribution of awards. For winners residing in the provinces of New Brunswick and Quebec, they

will receive a letter of congratulations, medal, medal certificates and electronic certificate in both official languages.

9. Distribute a copy of the final Competition Report to all Board members
10. Distribute a copy of the competition judging summary spreadsheet and final competition report to the Director of the Judging Program and the judging team members, detailing the scoring patterns amongst the judges.
11. Send an appropriate thank you message and honorarium each judge following the completion of a competition or salon.

Appeal Process

The President will:

1. Be the recipient of all appeals relating to:
 - a. Reports of potential conflicts of interest or violations of competition policy and procedures.
 - b. ***Withdrawal of image(s)*** from photo competition by Director.
2. Seek an interpretation of the appeal with the Association's Director of the Judging Program, if the event the President is not a Certified CAPA Judge.
3. Conduct a thorough review of the details and make a final determination on whether to accept the appeal or not.
4. Provide the originator of the appeal with a written or email response explaining the rationale for the final determination, with a copy sent to the Director.
5. **NOT** accept any appeals regarding:
 - a. Judge's rationale for scoring of images and/or comments.
 - b. Judges' disqualification of an image.
6. Provide the Board with an update on all submitted appeals and their respective findings.

Assistant Director of Competitions

The Director will:

1. Appoint an Assistant Director of Competitions, who will be responsible for:
 - a. Chairing the Pre-screening Committee.
 - b. Proposing potential improvements to the Director for enhancing the Competition Policy and Procedures.
 - c. Supporting the development of competition guidelines and recommend enhancements.
 - d. Offering suggestions to refine the Eligibility Criteria and address any gaps or deficiencies in the competition narrative.
 - e. Contributing suggestions to the Director on possible enhancements to the Competition Policy and Procedures.
 - f. Coordinating the Zone competitions selected by the Director.
 - g. Developing the Judges Summary spreadsheets.
 - h. Creating all the Honorable Mention and Club Medal Award e-certificates.
 - i. Acting as the Director's representative in their absence.

Pre-screening Of Submitted Competition Images

The Pre-screening committee will:

1. Review all submitted images to ensure compliance with Eligibility Criteria webpage and not make any changes related to the assignment.
2. Assume that images have been assigned to the correct theme by the entrant.
3. Identify and report to the Director any potential issues with submitted images, including:
 - a. Sexually explicit content.
 - b. Nude images of individual under the age of 19 years.
 - c. Visible watermarks with the entrant's name or camera club.
 - d. Unacceptable or missing titles entered into the upload 'title of image' field.
 - e. Image exceeds competition's editing criteria.

- f. Judges submitted their own images.
 - g. Images may appear sponsored by a trademark owner.
- 4. Inform the Director of any issues or concerns relating to a submitted image.
- 5. Contact entrants if their submission has any of the following issues:
 - a. Visible watermarks containing the entrant's name or name of camera club.
 - b. Unacceptable text entered into the upload 'title of image' field.
 - c. Image contains frames, borders (including pin-line borders), or physical mats.
- 6. Inform the entrant that failing to address the questionable issues may result in a recommendation to the Director for the withdrawal of their image from the competition.

The Director will:

- 1. Review all remaining questionable images and consider Association's judging mantra of "***We are to encourage NOT discourage – the benefit of doubt always goes to the photographer. Better an image on the edge is judged than disqualified.***"
- 2. Inform the entrant of their findings:
 - a. Ask them to revise the submitted image, or submit a different image before the competition closes. Failing to do so will result in **withdrawal of the image** from the competition; or
 - b. Permit the image to remain in the competition, allowing the judging panel to evaluate, score, or disqualify the image.
 - c. Failure to remove or replace the questionable image with an acceptable one will result in **withdraw of the image** from the competition, and will not be presented to the judging panel.
- 3. Accept the submission of nude images as long as they are not sexually explicit.
- 4. Seek the President's decision on whether to accept or reject questionable nude image entries.

5. Ensure that nude images of children under 19 years are not be posted on the Association's website.

Competition Coordinator

The Director will:

1. Appoint a Competition Coordinator for each competition or salon, providing guidance, orientation, to support them in fulfilling their assigned duties and responsibilities.
2. Provide the Competition Coordinator with:
 - a. Copy of the "*Instructions On Populating The Competition Summary Spreadsheet*" document and a blank Competition Summary spreadsheet.
 - b. Copy of the "*Guideline For Remote-Judging a Photo Competition*" document.
 - c. Copy of the "*Competition Policy and Procedures*" document.
3. Obtain a commitment from the Coordinator that they will:
 - a. Not submit image(s) into a competition they are coordinating.
 - b. Not be offered a position of a judge in the competition they are coordinating.
 - c. Disclose any potential conflicts of interest to the Director.
 - d. Maintain strict confidentiality regarding all details and documents related to managing the competition.
 - e. Refrain from releasing or disclosing any competition related information to individuals outside those directly involved in the competition.
 - f. Comply with the Competitions Policy and Procedures.
 - g. Submit the completed competition summary spreadsheet.
4. Reserves the right to dismiss a Coordinator who fails to follow or respond to the Director's instructions.
5. Provide the Coordinator with the appropriate user access to the judging system.
6. Support the Coordinator on the downloading process from the judging system.

7. Offer support and assistance to the Coordinator as needed throughout the competition management process.
8. Review the competition summary spreadsheet for accuracy before approving it.

Competition Scoring Values

The Director will:

1. Include in the approved scoring chart, containing score ranges and corresponding criteria as authorized by the Director of the Judging Program, in the “Guideline for Remote-Judging a Photo Competition” document. Refer to Appendix “A” for two approved examples.
2. Ensure the respective judging systems includes the Association’s scoring ranges.
3. Verify that any proposed revisions to the Judging Criteria for each competition is reviewed and approved by the Director of the Judging Program.

Selecting & Managing Competition Judges

The Director will:

1. Appoint judges for the Zone, National and Salon competitions based on the following parameters:
 - a. Judge must be a current member of the Association in good standing or designated as a temporary Association member.
 - b. Judge will have experience in the genre that they will be asked to judge.
2. Assemble judging teams with the following composition:
 - a. Ensure each team will consist of a minimum of three (3) judges: two (2) senior level judges and optionally one (1) junior level judge. A fourth judge may be included for training purposes.
 - b. Selected judges from different regions across the country, promoting diversity by including those with varied perspectives, backgrounds and experiences.
3. Maintain the current judging configurations to encourage voluntary participation from individuals willing to judge competitions by:

- a. Fostering a respectful relationship with judges ensuring clear communication, providing necessary support, and guidance, and recognizing their valuable contributions to the judging process.
 - b. Ensuring all judges have the opportunity to participate on a judging team in at least one per competition cycle.
 - c. Limiting each judging team's evaluation and scoring to no more than 450 images per competition, ensuring a manageable workload.
 - d. Providing 5 to 6 days for judges to complete the initial scoring of images.
 - e. Capping detailed feedback comment for only zone competitions to 50 images per judge, with additional judges assigned if this limit is exceeded.
 - f. Striving to distribute images for scoring as evenly as possible across multiple judging teams.
 - g. Allowing image disqualification with the agreement of two or more judges, reserving disqualification for exceptional cases.
 - h. Maintaining confidentiality regarding their discussions about specific entries.
 - i. Prohibiting entrants from appealing judges' scores and comments, making all evaluations final.
 - j. Requiring **re-evaluation of an original score** if the judges' scores vary by 3.0 or more points, without an obligation to change the original score.
 - k. Breaking ties for medal and merit awards.
 - l. Providing the judges with a copy of the final competition report and the judging summary spreadsheet.
 - m. Acknowledging each judge's contribution through a personalized thank-you card honorarium.
- 4. Not proceed with the **re-evaluation of an original score** process for the Association hosted Salon.
 - 5. Provide all selected judges with copies of the following documents, prior to the commencement of the judging process:
 - a. *Guideline in Remote Judging A Photo Competition document.*

- b. *Judge's AI Clue document.*
- 6. Refrain from modifying a judge's score unless explicitly authorized to do so by the respective judge.
- 7. Not publish judges' names before the judging process to prevent entrants from tailoring submissions to perceived preferences and to ensure impartial and objective evaluations, based solely on merit.
- 8. Permit the publish the names of judges for an international-hosted salon, provided the following guidelines are communicated to all judges:
 - a. Maintain impartiality and objectivity by evaluating entries solely on merit.
 - b. Avoid viewing, commenting, or interacting with entrants before or after the competition.
 - c. Refrain from responding to or discussing with an entrant about their image(s) before the commencement of judging or during the judging process, as such discussions are against the competition rules.
 - d. Decline any gifts, favors, or inducements from entrants.
 - e. Report significant lobbying attempts by entrants to the Competition Coordinator, which may lead to entrant being disqualified from the Competition by the Director.

Judges Decisions

Director or Coordinator will:

- 1. Not alter the decision of the judges.

Judges will:

- 1. Award medals and honourable mentions in complete autonomy and do not need to justify its decisions.

Allocation of Association Awards

Director will:

- i. Proceed with the announcing the award recipients after all potential winning images have successfully passed the verification and authentication processes.

- ii. Determine salon awards with corresponding criteria and these proposed awards will be approved by the Board.
- iii. Allocate awards for both the Association '*Club*' and '*Individual*' categories in a competition as follows:
 - **Gold Medal** – Awarded to the entrant with the highest aggregate score.
 - **Silver Medal** – Awarded to the entrant with the second-highest aggregate score.
 - **Bronze Medal** – Awarded to the entrant with the third-highest aggregate score.
 - **1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place Merit Award e-certificate** – Awarded to the three highest scoring individual images for each theme in a competition.
- iv. Address tie-breaking of images as follows:
 - There shall be no tie for the highest aggregate score (Gold Medal). If a tie occurs the judges will break the tie by awarding an additional 0.5 points to the Gold Medal Winning total score.
 - For ties in the Silver and Bronze Medal rankings, the judges will make the final selection.
 - There shall be no ties for the Merit Award e-certificates, judges will break any ties that occur.
- v. Award the Honorable Mention e-certificates to the entrants with the fourth-highest aggregate score and subsequent entrants, provided that the total number of Honorable Mentions do not exceed 10% of the total entrants.

Appendix “A”

CAPA’s Standard Scoring Chart

Points	Base Evaluations on these Considerations
4	Extremely, poor, with multiple serious faults
5	Fair, possibly with major faults
6	Good – displays average technical qualities and average impact
7-8	Excellent image – above average in technical qualities and impact
9	Exceptionally good – very high technical qualities and high impact
10	Demonstrates the ‘wow’ factor – outstanding impact and technical aspect

To ensure a wider distribution of scores and minimize the number of ties, judges are encouraged to use .5 scores (such as 4.5, 5.5, 6.5, 7.5, 8.5,9.5).

CAPA's Salon Scoring Chart

Points	Base Evaluations on these Considerations
1	The entry is inappropriate to the category or has serious flaws in its quality.
2 or 3	While a good entry, there are aspects that are less than high quality.
4 or 5	Here the entry is strong and is of high quality, but not only has some of the aspects described for higher scoring entries.
6 or 7	The entry is worthy of gaining an award, again with a strong impact, storytelling, compositional value and technically with little fault.
8 to 9	The Entry is worthy of winning the competition. This entry should have stand-out features, excellent storytelling, compositional value and technically without fault.

Note - Source for this chart was taken from the Australian Photographic Society.