GUIDELINES FOR USING THE
STARS 1-5 APPLICATIONS SPREADSHEET

Members can download the *Star Ratings 1-5 Application Spreadsheet* (Excel file) from the Stars/ROPA Overview page of the PSA website https://psa-photo.org/index.php?stars-and-ropa It is important to also download and read the "*Stars 1-5 Applications Instructions*" before attempting to use the spreadsheet.

You will need a separate copy of the spreadsheet for each Division and Class in which you want to make a Star application. *You cannot combine Star applications in two different Divisions or Classes (such as PIDC and PIDM) on the same spreadsheet.* The spreadsheet and instructions are updated periodically, so you should download the latest version before making your first application in any Division.

OPENING AND SAVING THE SPREADSHEET
The spreadsheet has certain automated and protection features built in, so the most suitable program for opening and saving the spreadsheet is *Microsoft Office (Excel)*, either on a Windows or Mac computer.

When you save the spreadsheet, save it as an Excel (.xlsx) file with a name in the following format "Robert-Thompson-PTD-Star-3.xlsx" – that is, your given name (first name), your surname (family name), the Division or Class, and the Star for which you are applying. The Save dialogue box should look like this (except you will nominate your own "Where" location for the files):
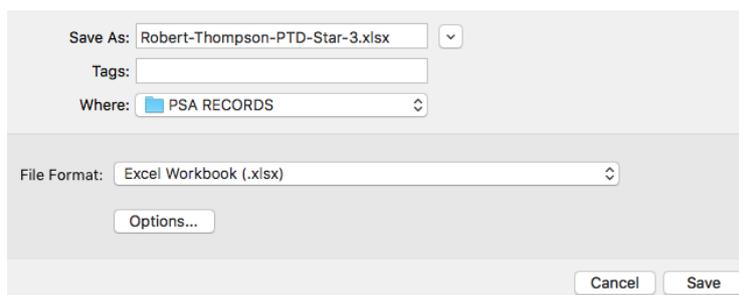
If you have an earlier version of *Microsoft Excel* that saves files in the "Excel 97-2004 Workbook (.xls)" format that will be OK, the spreadsheet will retain all its formatting and functions.

Please do not use any older version of *Microsoft Excel* that saves files in the "Excel 5.0/95 Workbook (.xls)" format because some of the critical formatting and functions of the spreadsheet will be lost.

If you do not have a suitable version of *Microsoft Excel* it is recommended that you download and install a free copy of either *LibreOffice* or *OpenOffice*. (Do a Google search to locate a

download site.) Refer to the notes at the end of this document if you are using *LibreOffice* or *OpenOffice*.

Please do not use the Mac *Numbers* program to prepare your Star applications. This program will open and save the Excel file but the spreadsheet will lose some of the important features that have been built in to make it easy for members to use and easy for Star Ratings Directors to process. There are also some other compatibility issues mentioned in the following section.

SETTING UP YOUR PERSONAL RECORD SYSTEM
The Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet is a workbook with multiple pages. You select the page you need from the tabs at the bottom of the screen:

APPLICANT	NEW TITLES LIST	NEW ACCEPTANCES LIST	VERIFIED TITLES LIST	VERIFIED ACCEPTANCES LIST	STARS	PJ ONLY

Note: Three of these page tabs are *green* – you have to enter data on those pages for each new application. Three of the tabs are *red* – those pages are for use by the Star Ratings Director and they give you an ongoing record of your verified titles, verified acceptances and Star applications; except in the special circumstances described later, you will not have to enter data on those pages. One tab is *blue* – that is for special applications in the Photojournalism Division.

If you open the New Acceptances page of the Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet you will see the following column headings in the area where you enter data:

Exhibition	PSA No.	Country	Year	Acc. No.	Title	SRD Verification	Notes	Div/Class for PIDC only

When you are entering exhibitions, it is important to keep accurate records of your acceptances so that you will have **all** the necessary information you need for making your Star Ratings applications. It is useful to have a record system that has all the information you need for an application and has that information in the same format as that required for a Star application. You will probably have your own preferred way of keeping records of your acceptances, but the following system will make it easy for you to complete your Star applications. The long-term benefits of setting up a record system in this way will be well worth the time, particularly if you currently have no Star Ratings or only a few Star Ratings. This is my recommendation:

1. Create a spreadsheet that has the columns shown above - in exactly the same order. For convenience, I will refer to this as your Master record of acceptances.
2. You will need a separate Master spreadsheet for each Division and Class in which you have acceptances (for example, PIDC, PIDM, Nature, Photojournalism). You may find it convenient to create these as separate pages (sheets) in a workbook and save the workbook as one Master file with worksheet tabs like this:

PIDC	PIDM	NATURE	PJ	TRAVEL	LARGE COLOUR PRINTS	LARGE MONO PRINTS

3. Please do NOT create your Master spreadsheet in Mac *Numbers*; use *Microsoft Excel* or *OpenOffice* or *LibreOffice* (whichever program you will use when completing your Star Applications Spreadsheet). If you use *Numbers* you may have trouble copying information from your Master record to your application.
4. Be sure to save a backup of your Master file.

5. If you already have acceptances from PSA recognized exhibitions, you should enter the information about those acceptances into your Master spreadsheet(s). If you have a lot of acceptances, this may be a large task but it will save you time when you come to submitting Star Ratings applications. If your existing records are in an Excel spreadsheet this should be a simple 'copy and paste' operation (but take care that you get the information in the correct columns).

6. If your existing records are in Mac *Numbers*, you will be able to copy and paste blocks of data into *Microsoft Excel* or into *OpenOffice* but you may have trouble pasting blocks of data into *LibreOffice* (if you have chosen to use that program for your applications). A simple solution to this is to export your existing data (in *Numbers*) as an Excel file and then open that file in *LibreOffice* and copy the relevant data to your Master spreadsheet.

7. If you have already claimed a particular acceptance on a Star application you need to record this in your Master file - put a note in the 'Notes' column (such as Star 1) so that you will not accidentally claim that acceptance again.

8. As you gain new acceptances from PSA recognized exhibitions, add the details to your Master record.

9. When you are making a Star Rating application, you can simply copy and paste the data for the acceptances that you want to use from your Master record to the application spreadsheet. Acceptances that you do not want to use at that time can remain in the Master file for later use.

10. When your Star Ratings application is approved, the Star Ratings Director will return your application spreadsheet. If any corrections have been made on the application, you should transfer those corrections to your Master spreadsheet.

11. In the 'Notes' column on your Master spreadsheet, record the Star application for which each of the verified acceptance was used (e.g. Star 3) so that your Master record is kept up to date.

You may find it helpful to add extra columns to your Master record – for information that is not needed on Star applications but which might be useful to you for other reasons. For example, a column for awards (gold medal, etc) or a column for the file name of the image. If you do this, make sure you add the extra columns to the right of the "Div/Class" column so that when you copy data to your applications spreadsheet you will copy *only* the information needed for the application and all the columns will be in the correct order.

You may find it convenient to add extra sheets to your Master file so that you can keep a progressive record of the image titles you use for each Division and Class. You can decide how to set up these pages and what information you want to record; but you might find it useful to use a format such as this:

TITLES FOR NATURE DIVISION STAR APPLICATIONS			
Title No.	Title	Used for Star No.	Original file name
1	Cheetah stretching	1	D3D3836.NEF
2	Crouching leopard	2	D3D0023.NEF
3	Eagle attack	1	D3F4568.NEF
4	Giraffe in sand dune	1	D3A1836.NEF
5	Goshawk landing	2	D4S4710.NEF
6	Grey heron	2	D4S8642.NEF
7	Lilac breasted roller	1	D3D9912.NEF
8	Meerkat with scorpion	1	D3D3336.NEF
9	Whistling rat	2	D4S4210.NEF
10	White tailed eagle	2	D4S9403.NEF

ADDING DATA TO THE STAR APPLICATION SPREADSHEET
You will need a separate Star Application Spreadsheet for each Division and Class. You cannot, for example, combine PIDC and PIDM Star applications.

Applicant page: This is where you enter your personal information (name, address, etc) as well as your *PSA joining date* and *Stars Buy Back date* (if you have taken advantage of the buy-back option that is explained in the *Stars 1-5 Applications Instructions*.)

Please check that all this information is the same as the information in the PSA member database. To do this, log in to the PSA website and select "My Account".

On the Applicant page, you need to make selections from two drop-down lists to indicate which Star Rating you are applying for:

Please select a Division or Class

Select Stars

For each selection, click on the coloured cell, then click on the small arrow to the right of that cell to reveal all the options.

Before leaving the Applicant page you have to agree to five statements to indicate that you have read and understood the rules regarding Star Ratings. You need to select a YES or NO response to each statement.

New Titles List page: Here you must list of **all** of the NEW titles that you are using for this current application. *Do NOT include any titles that have previously been verified on a Star application in this Division or Class*.

After you have entered all the new titles and checked them against the titles on your New Acceptances list (to make sure no titles are missing) sort the titles alphabetically.

New Acceptances List page: Here you must list of **all** of the NEW acceptances that you are using for the current application. *Do NOT include any acceptances that have previously been verified on a Star application in the same Division or Class as your current application*.

After you have entered all the new acceptances, sort the list first by **Image Title** (alphabetically, A to Z) then by **Exhibition Name** (alphabetically) and then by **Exhibition PSA Number**. This sorting sequence will make it easy for the Star Ratings Directors to check your acceptances against the information in the PSA acceptances database.

The three steps in the sorting of your acceptances are done in **one operation**, not as three separate sorts. The sorting procedure depends on which program you are using:

If you are using *Microsoft Office*:
Select **all** *the column headings* and **all** *the data* in the columns from the Exhibition column to the Div/Class column (if it is a PIDC application) or from the Exhibition column to the Title column for all other Divisions.

Exhibition	PSA No.	Country	Year	Acc. No.	Title	SRD Verification	Notes	Div/Class for PIDC only
Olympic Circuit	2009-220	Greece	2009		Frozen pond			EID
Podgorica	2012-046	Montenegro	2012		All together			CPID
GASO Circuit	2013-011	USA	2013		Brilliant sunrise			PIDC
GASO Circuit	2013-011	USA	2013		Wild storm			PIDC
Oklahoma	2014-214	USA	2014		Brilliant sunrise			PIDC
Algarve	2015--072	Portugal	2015		Happy Harry			PIDC
Balkan Dream	2015-306	Serbia	2015		Wild storm			PIDC
Kotor	2015-044	Ireland	2015		Landing zone			PIDC
Maitland	2015-001	Australia	2015		Happy Harry			PIDC
PSA	2015-175	USA	2015		Happy Harry			PIDC
Toronto	2015-306	Canada	2015		Brilliant sunrise			PIDC
Maitland	2017-003	Australia	2017		Landing zone			PIDC
Yualin	2017-086	Taiwan	2017		Wild storm			PIDC

From the main menu in Excel select Data>Sort. In the window that opens, set up the following sorting options (making sure that "My list has headers" is checked in the top right of the window):
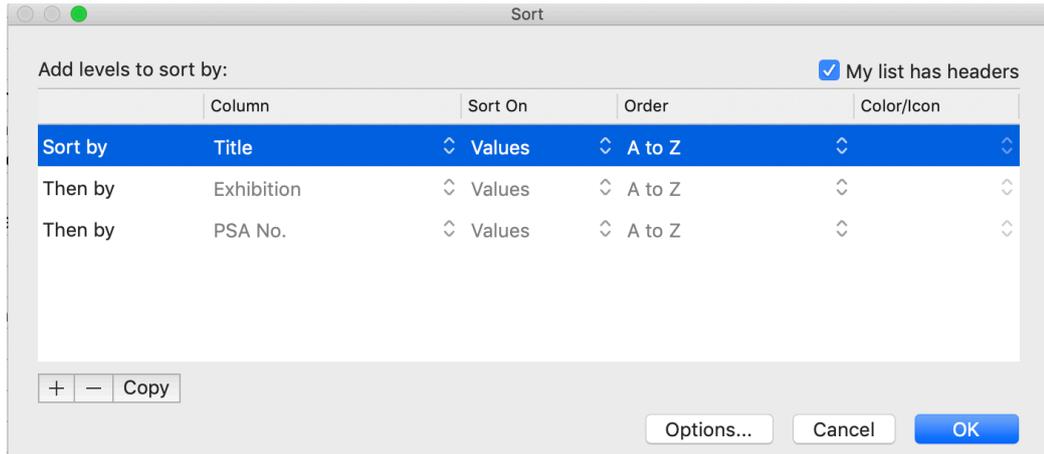
To set up this three-stage sort, you select the option to sort by Title, then click on the "+" sign at the bottom left to get the next option and set up the sort by Exhibition. Then click on the "+" sign again to get the third option and set up the sort by PSA No.. Then click "OK" and the sorting will be done.

If you are using LibreOffice or OpenOffice please refer to the notes at the end of this document.

After **sorting the acceptances, number them in the "Acc. No." column**. Start with "1" if this is a Star 1 application. If this application does not include Star 1, start with the number following the number of your *last verified acceptance* on your previous application in this Division or Class. For example, if this is your Star 2 application and you had 18 acceptances verified on your Star 1 application you will start your numbering at 19. If you had 20 acceptances verified on your Star 1 application (2 extra) then on your Star 2 application you would start numbering your acceptances at 21.

Verified Titles List page: If this is a Star 1 application this page will have no entries.

If this is a Star 2, 3, 4 or 5 application (and your last application was on *a spreadsheet in the current spreadsheet format*) this page will list all the titles that have previously been verified by a Star Ratings Director. [As each of your applications is approved, the SRD will copy the information from your New Titles list to this page and lock the page so that it cannot be changed.]

If you have previously had a Star application approved in this Division or Class and that application was submitted on *a spreadsheet in a different format* you need to copy the Complete Titles List from your last approved Star application to the Verified Titles List page of this spreadsheet. To make this record complete, you could add Star

1, Star 2, etc. in the 'Notes' column. *Please refer to the later notes about what you need to send to the Star Ratings Director with your application.*

If you have previously received a Star Rating in this Division or Class from *a paper application* please list *all* your previously verified titles on the Verified Titles List page of your application spreadsheet. This is important because when you reach Star 5 all the titles that you used for Stars 1 to 5 cannot be used on Galaxy applications. To make this record complete, you could add Star 1, Star 2, etc. in the 'Notes' column. *Please refer to the later notes about what you need to send to the Star Ratings Director with your application.*

Verified Acceptances List page: If this is a Star 1 application this page will have no entries.

If this is a Star 2, 3, 4 or 5 application (and your last application was on *a spreadsheet in the current spreadsheet format*) this page will list all the acceptances that have previously been verified by a Star Ratings Director. [As each of your applications is approved, the SRD will copy the information from your New Acceptances list to this page and lock the page so that it cannot be changed.]

If you have previously had a Star application approved in this Division or Class and that application was submitted on *a spreadsheet in a different format* please copy the Acceptances Lists from each of your previous Star applications to the Verified Acceptances List page of this spreadsheet. This will give you a complete list of verified acceptances in one place. To make this record complete, you could add Star 1, Star 2, etc. in the 'Notes' column and sort the complete list as described earlier in these notes. *Please refer to the later notes about what you need to send to the Star Ratings Director with your application.*

If you have previously received a Star Rating in this Division or Class from *a paper application* you must list all those verified acceptances on the Verified Acceptances List page of this spreadsheet. You will also have to provide evidence of the acceptances verified on your previous Star applications. *Please refer to the later notes about what you need to send to the Star Ratings Director with your application.*

Stars page: This page is for use by the Star Ratings Director and it will give you an ongoing record of the Stars you have achieved in this Division or Class. The SRD will lock this page.

PJ Only page: The only time you need to enter data on this page is when you are claiming publication credits in the Photojournalism Division. The rules for claiming these credits are described in the Star 1-5 Application Instructions document.

COMBINED APPLICATIONS FOR MULTIPLE STARS
The Stars 1-5 Applications Instructions indicate that you can apply for multiple Stars in the same Division or Class in one application *up to Star 4*. You could, for example, apply for Stars 1-2 or 2-3 or even 1-4 on a single application. There is a drop-down list on the Applicant page of the spreadsheet that allows you to select which stars are included on your application. If you do this, DO NOT separate the application by Stars, just list and sort all the New Titles and New Acceptances in exactly the same way that you would for a single Star application.

You cannot apply for Star 5 until you have had Star 4 awarded. Therefore, ***you cannot have Star 5 included on any multiple-star application***.

It is highly recommended that if you are submitting an application for the first time you should submit a Star 1 application rather than an application for multiple stars. This will enable you to become familiar with the spreadsheet without needing to deal with a large number of acceptances. It will give you confidence that you understand the rules and it will enable you to see how your new titles and acceptances on the Star 1 application are processed by the Star Ratings Director so that the spreadsheet is ready for your Star 2 application.

<mark>EMAILING YOUR APPLICATION TO THE STAR RATINGS DIRECTOR</mark>.

Before emailing your application to the SRD, please check that you have completed *all* the required information on *all* pages of the spreadsheet.

If you are in any doubt about how to complete any part of the spreadsheet please do the following:
- Check the relevant section of the Stars 1-5 Applications Instructions.
- If necessary, email the SRD before you submit your application and ask for help.

All Star applications for a Division are emailed to the **Star Ratings Co-ordinator** for that Division. You will find email links for each Division on the pages that you can access from these thinks on the Stars/ROPA Overview page:

> **PSA Star Ratings Directors** *(Each of the following is linked directly to each division Star Ratings page, which includes Director(s) name(s), email(s), and procedures.)*
> - Projected Image Division Star Ratings
> - Nature Division Star Ratings
> - Photo Travel Division Star Ratings
> - Photojournalism Division Star Ratings
> - Pictorial Print Division Star Ratings
> - 3D Division Star Ratings

What you need to send to the Star Ratings Coordinator:
- If your application includes Star 1, or if your previous Star application in this Division or Class was in ***the current spreadsheet format***, all you need to send to the SR Cordinator is the application spreadsheet (unless the SRC has requested that you send any other information).

- If your previous Star application in this Division or Class was o*n **a spreadsheet in a different format*** you need to send to the SR Coordinator your application in the current spreadsheet format *plus* the spreadsheet from your last approved Star Rating in this Division or Class.

- If your previous Star application in this Division or Class was ***on paper*** you need to send to the SR Coordinator your application in the current spreadsheet format *plus* a scan of the original signed Complete Titles List from your last approved Star Rating in this Division or Class *and* a scan of the verified acceptances lists from each of your previous Star applications in this Division or Class.

You do not need to send a copy of your membership card (as was required in the past) because the Star Ratings Director will be checking your membership details against the PSA

member database. It is very important to check that your details on the website are correct before submitting your application – especially your name as you want it to appear on your certificate.

AFTER YOUR APPLICATION HAS BEEN SUBMITTED
The SRD will send you an email to acknowledge that your application has been received and tell you if there is likely to be a delay in processing the application. Please remember that all the SRDs are volunteers and some of them have a very heavy PSA workload. There can be delays for many reasons (holidays, sickness, family commitments, etc) but all the SRDs try to process applications as quickly as possible.

If the SRD can verify all the acceptances you are claiming, and if there are no other problems with your application, you will receive an email that gives you a link for making a PayPal payment of the application fee. The current fee *for each Star* is shown on this page of the PSA website *https://psa-photo.org/index.php?stars-and-ropa*. If you apply for more than one Star at a time (e.g. a combined application for Stars 2-3) you have to multiply the fee by the number of Stars. Special arrangements can be made for members who live in countries where PayPal payments are prohibited and the Star Ratings Director will give you details of these arrangements.

When the SRD is notified that you have made the PayPal payment (or other payment), your application spreadsheet will be returned to you and you will be sent a Star Rating Merit Certificate as a PDF file. You will need this certificate when you are applying for a ROPA distinction online.

RESOLVING PROBLEMS WITH YOUR APPLICATION
The Star Ratings Director will normally use the PSA acceptances database and/or the Exhibition Data Acceptances Spreadsheets (EDAS) to verify the acceptances you have claimed. Exhibitions are required to submit their EDAS reports within 30 days of the completion of judging. The data from the EDAS reports then has to be entered in the PSA database. *If you claim an acceptance before the EDAS report has been processed your application will be delayed.* When an exhibition submits its EDAS report this will be marked off on the "Closed Exhibitions" page for the relevant year on the PSA website. For example, here for 2019 https://psa-photo.org/index.php?closed-exhibitions-2019 Please check this page before submitting your application.

If you claim acceptances from an exhibition that has not submitted an EDAS report (perhaps an exhibition from earlier than 2013) the SRD will ask you to supply other suitable evidence to support the acceptances. The SRD will tell you what evidence is required – normally it will be a scan of the cover and relevant pages of the exhibition catalogue.

If there are any other problems with your application, the Star Ratings Director will contact you.

AFTER THE SRD RETURNS YOUR APPROVED APPLICATION
Save the spreadsheet in a safe place and *make a back-up copy of it*.

Unless this was a Star 5 approval, you will need to use *the spreadsheet that was returned to you* for your next Star application in that Division or Class.

If you had a Star 5 application approved, your Galaxy 1 application (or Master 1 application in the case of the 3D Division) will be on a different spreadsheet. You can copy and paste the Verified Titles List from your Star 5 application to your Galaxy 1 application.

APPLYING FOR GALAXY AWARDS
You cannot apply for Galaxy 1 in a Division or Class until you have been awarded Star 5 in that Division or Class.

When you have achieved Star 5 in a Division, download the Galaxy-Diamond Applications spreadsheet and instructions from the Stars/ROPA overview page of the PSA website.

USING LibreOffice OR OpenOffice

SAVING FILES
If you decide to use *LibreOffice* you will be able to save the files in the "Microsoft Excel 2007-2013 XML (.xlsx)" format and all the necessary spreadsheet functions will work satisfactorily. [However, see the later note about copying data to a *LibreOffice* spreadsheet from the Mac *Numbers* spreadsheet if you are a Mac user.]

If you decide to use *OpenOffice* on a Windows or Mac computer, you should save the spreadsheet in the "ODF Spreadsheet (.ods)" format. The Save dialogue box in *OpenOffice* will look like this:
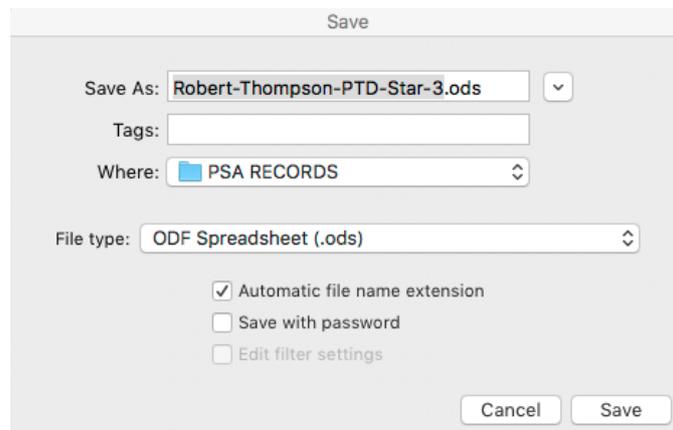

OpenOffice can save files in various Excel formats but some of those formats cause problems with the Star Applications spreadsheet. The Star Ratings Director will be able to open files in the ODF format when you submit your applications.

SORTING YOUR ACCEPTANCES
If you are using *OpenOffice*:
Select all the column headings and all the data in the columns from the Exhibition column to the Div/Class column..

From the main menu select Data>Sort. In the window that opens, set up the following sorting criteria; then click OK.
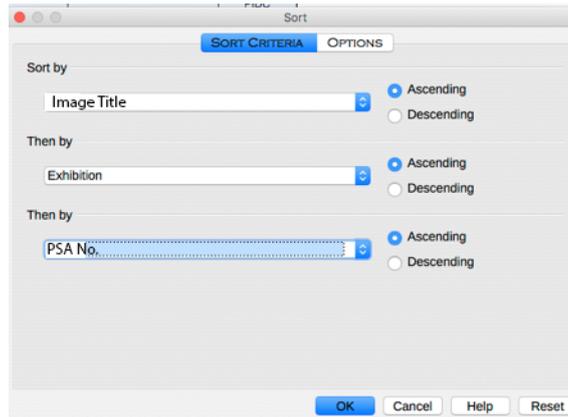
If you are using *LibreOffice*:
Select all the column headings and all the data in the columns from the Exhibition column to the Div/Class column (if it is a PIDC application) or from the Exhibition column to the Title column for all other Divisions.

From the main menu select Data>Sort. In the window that opens, set up the following sorting criteria, then click OK:
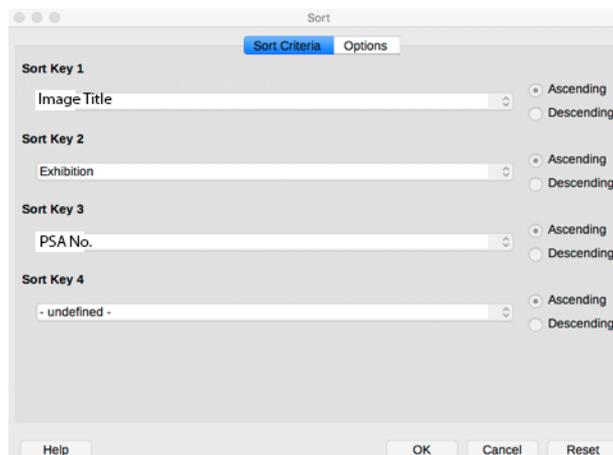
Note: Ignore the Sort Key 4 (it appears automatically when you enter Sort Key 3).

If you have any questions please email the Star Ratings Coordinator in the Division in which you will be submitting your application.

Dr Roy Killen, GMPSA, EFIAP, APSEM
Membership Vice President