



# APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR STAR RATINGS 1-5

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Part A – General Instructions	2
The basic applications process	2
Checking eligibility of acceptances	2
Image titles	3
Acceptances and titles required for Stars	4
Using acceptances gained before joining PSA	5
Using acceptances gain during a break in PSA membership	5
Basic application rules	5
Data accuracy and error correction	6
Star 5/Galaxy considerations	7
Star rating Certificates and Verified Records	7
Application fee	7
Credits for Annual PSA Division competitions	8
Judging credits	8
Part B – Specific Instructions for each Division and Class	9
Projected Image Division – Color Class	9
Projected Image Division – Monochrome Class	9
Pictorial Print Division – all Classes	10
Nature Division	10
Photojournalism Division	10
Photo Travel Division	10
3D Division	10
Appendix A – Definitions	12
Appendix B – Table of acceptance and title requirements	13
Appendix C – PSA Ethical Practices	14
Appendix D – Preparing an application	15
Appendix E – Format for claiming judging credits	18
Appendix F – Format for claiming photo essay credits	18
Appendix G – Stars buy back years	19
Appendix H – Star ratings application checklist	21

## INTRODUCTION

Star Ratings are the process that PSA uses to acknowledge members' acceptances in PSA-recognized international exhibitions. As each Star Rating is approved (One Star, Two Stars, etc.) a Star Ratings Award of Merit is issued. These certificates can later be used as proof of verified acceptances when a member applies for Recognition of Photographic Achievement (ROPA) distinctions.

PSA is organized into six Divisions – Projected Image Division (PID), Photojournalism Division (PJD), Nature Division (ND), Photo Travel Division (PTD), Pictorial Print Division (PPD) and 3D Division. The Projected Image Division has two subdivisions called Classes – they are Color (PIDC) and Monochrome (PIDM.) The Pictorial Print Division has four Classes – they are Large Color Prints (CPA), Large Monochrome Prints (MPA), Small Color Prints (CPB) and Small Monochrome Prints (MPB).

When PSA gives recognition to an international exhibition each section of the exhibition gains its approval from a specific Division or Class. International Exhibitions that have sections recognized by PSA are listed monthly in the *PSA Journal* and on the PSA Web Site. Each exhibition is given a PSA recognition number such as 'PSA 2017-215'. Only acceptances received in *sections* of international exhibitions recognized by PSA can be used towards Star Ratings (in the Division or Class that recognized the section).

These instructions are divided into two parts. Part A is information that applies to all Divisions and Classes; Part B is information that is specific to the Divisions and Classes that have some additional special rules. Supplementary information to assist you with your applications is in the appendices.

Before proceeding, you should read the PSA Ethics Statement in Appendix C.

Only PSA members in good standing (membership current) can be awarded Star Ratings.

## **PART A – GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

*These instructions are for **Star Ratings 1-5 in all Divisions and Classes**. (The 3D Division has an additional 6<sup>th</sup> Star Rating.) It is important that you understand all these instructions before you make any Star Rating application.*

### **The Basic Application Process**

To apply for a Star Rating, you must do the following:

- Complete a list of the **acceptances** that you want to claim – using the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* that you can download from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website.
- Complete a list of the image **titles** that you used for those acceptances – using the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet*.
- Email the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* to the relevant Star Ratings Director. The names and contact details of the Star Ratings Directors are on the PSA web site.
- Pay the Star application fee.

### **Checking the Eligibility of Acceptances**

1. When you enter an international exhibition, it is important to note the Division or Class that has granted recognition to the section you are entering because each Division and Class has a separate Star Path. Acceptances gained in a section recognized by one Division or Class cannot be used in an application for a Star Rating in a different Division or Class. For example, acceptances in a PIDM recognised section cannot be used in a PIDC Star

application; acceptances gained in a Photo Travel section cannot be used in a Photojournalism Star application, and so on.

2. Once an image has been accepted in an exhibition it cannot be entered again in that exhibition in a later year in the same Division or Class even if there are differently named sections in the Division or Class. For example, if an image was accepted in a landscape section recognised by PIDC in 2016, it cannot be entered in an open section of the same exhibition recognised by PIDC in a subsequent year. (Note: PPD allows the same image to be entered in both large print and small print classes (in different years) because these are different Star Paths; but check the rules of the exhibition because some exhibitions prohibit this.)
3. Some exhibitions have both print and digital sections that are recognised by the same Division. For example, an exhibition might have a Nature Print section and a Nature Digital section. The same image cannot be entered in both sections in the same year. An image receiving an acceptance in one of those sections cannot be entered in the other section in a subsequent year.
4. If the same image receives acceptances in sections of different exhibitions that were recognized by different Divisions or Classes (for example, PIDC and Nature) the acceptances in each Division/Class can be used for Star Ratings applications in the relevant Division or Class. For example, if your Nature image called "Red fox" was accepted in a Nature section in the Southampton International and in a PIDC section in the Yorkshire International the Southampton acceptance could be used in a Nature Star application and the Yorkshire acceptance could be used in a PIDC Star application.
5. It is important to note that the subject matter in an image does *not* determine its eligibility for use in a Star Rating application. For example, if an image that satisfies the Nature definition is accepted in a PIDC section it is *not* eligible for use towards a Nature Star. It is the Division/Class that the image was accepted in that determines which Star Path it can be used in.

### **Image Titles**

6. Each different image you enter in a PSA recognized exhibition must have a unique title.
7. A projected image and a print of the same image must have the same title.
8. Current PSA rules consider a color version of a data capture and a monochrome version of the same data capture to be different images that must be given different titles. (Note: In 2012, a color version and a monochrome version of the same data capture might have had the same title. If you had acceptances of a color version and monochrome version of the same data capture in that year, then both versions keep the same title.)
9. Once an image has been accepted in a PSA recognized exhibition, that same image, or a like "in camera" or a "reproduction" duplicate of that image may not be re-titled for entry in that or any other PSA recognized exhibition even if it is entered in sections recognized by different Divisions or Classes. If you have inadvertently used two titles for the same image, tell the Star Ratings Director when you apply for the relevant Star so that a decision can be made about whether those acceptances will be counted. For example, you might indicate that 'Sunrise' and 'Pink Sky' are the same image, inadvertently entered under different titles.
10. Exhibitors frequently append a number or letter after the text of the title to meet this requirement (for example, "Red rose" and "Red rose 2"). This is permitted, but it is not recommended. The omission of this extra data is the most common error found in catalogs and other results notifications. Not having it corrected can cause you to lose acceptances and title credits.

11. The Conditions of Entry of some exhibitions place character limits on titles. Exceeding this limit can cause your title to be truncated in the catalog. This may result in your claim for a title or acceptance being rejected. If the title of your intended entry exceeds the character limit and it has already been accepted in another PSA recognized exhibition, regardless of which Division or Class recognized it, you cannot change its title. You will have to select another image with a shorter title for entry into that exhibition.
12. Initials and abbreviations can be used to reduce the title length, and will be considered the same title as one with the words fully spelled out. If you submit a Star Ratings application with shortened titles, be sure to put the exact title that was accepted by the exhibition on your Acceptance List, but show the two titles that you had to use for an image on your Titles List. For example, on your Titles List show "Mountain Sunset Yellowstone National Park = Mtn Sunset Yellowstone NP" to indicate both titles are the same image. In these circumstances, only one of these titles will be counted towards the minimum number of titles needed for the Star award.
13. Do not use full words and abbreviated words to get different titles on your Titles List. This is unacceptable and the titles will not be validated.
14. If you, or an exhibition organizer, have made a minor error in an image title you can indicate this on your Titles List in the following way: "Two little girl" = "Two little girls".

#### Acceptances and Titles required for Stars

15. The Star Ratings in each Division or Class require a specific number of acceptances that have been achieved with a *minimum* number of different titles:

Star	Acceptances	Titles (minimum)
1	18	6
2	36	12
3	72	24
4	144	48
5	288	96

Note: the 3D Division has a 6<sup>th</sup> Star requiring 488 acceptances from at least 120 titles.

16. When you apply for Star 2 in a Division or Class where you already have Star 1, the titles and acceptances that you used for Star 1 in that Division or Class are included in the totals. For example, if you used 6 titles and 18 acceptances for Star 1 in PIDC, those titles and their acceptances would be part of the 12 titles and 36 acceptances that you can use for Star 2 in PIDC. When you apply for Star 3 in PIDC the titles and acceptances that were verified for Star 2 are included, and so on. This is shown in detail in Appendix B.
17. The table above shows that the average number of acceptances needed for each title is three. However, a Star Ratings application may use titles with only one acceptance and there is no limit on the maximum number of acceptances that may be used for each title. For example, Star 1 could be achieved with any of these combinations of titles and acceptances:
  - 6 titles, each with 3 acceptances
  - 9 titles each, with 2 acceptances
  - 18 titles, each with 1 acceptance
  - 3 titles, each with 1 acceptance, and 3 titles, each with 5 acceptances
 Any other combination that used a minimum of 6 titles to give 18 acceptances.

### Using Acceptances Gained Before You Joined PSA

18. With the exceptions of the provisions described in the next two paragraphs, acceptances used in Star applications must have been gained *after* you joined PSA.
19. A member's Star 1 application *in each Division or Class* may contain eligible acceptances gained in PSA recognized exhibitions at any time prior to the member joining PSA. This allows a maximum of 18 acceptances *in each Division or Class* that were gained prior to joining PSA to be used in Star 1 applications.
20. There is a **Buy Back Program** that allows new members to purchase **Stars Buy Back Years** so that they can use eligible acceptances gained during that buy-back period when applying for Stars. The maximum number of Stars Buy Back Years that can be purchased is ten. Application for Stars Buy Back Years must be made within the first five years of membership and there is a fee for each year purchased. (In 2017 this fee was \$25 per year.) Each member can make a Stars Buy Back only *once*. The Stars Buy Back Years are counted from your date of joining PSA. Examples of how to calculate the Stars Buy Back Years that you might need to purchase are given in Appendix G.

### Using Acceptances Gained During a Break on Your PSA Membership.

21. If you have a break in your PSA membership and then re-join you have the option of paying for Stars Bridging Buy Back Years so that acceptances achieved during the break in your membership can be included in Star Rating applications. This benefit may be used only *once*. The maximum number of bridging years that can be purchased is ten. Application for bridging years must be made within five years of rejoining PSA. Stars Bridging Buy Back Years can be purchased from this link "[psa-photo.org/index.php?bridging-buy-back](http://psa-photo.org/index.php?bridging-buy-back)". (In 2017 the fee was \$25 per year.)

### Basic Application Rules

22. Applications for Star Ratings must be in English.
23. Applications must be made on the **Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet** that can be downloaded from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website.
24. You may apply for more than one Star at a time in a single application, up to your 4th Star. For example, if your last approved Star in Nature Division was Star 2 you can apply for your 3rd and 4th Stars in Nature Division at the same time.
25. Unless you have received prior permission from the relevant Star Ratings Director, you cannot apply for your 5th Star in a Division or Class until you have been notified that your 4th Star application in that Division or Class has been approved.
26. If you apply for more than one Star at a time, do NOT separate your application for each Star level. Your single Acceptance List (on the New Acceptances page of the application spreadsheet) will start numbering from where the last approved Star left off and end with the requirements for the highest Star you are applying for. Your single titles list (on the New Titles page of the spreadsheet) will show all the new titles you are using for the application.
27. On each Star Ratings application, it is helpful to include one or two extra titles and their acceptances in case errors are identified in your application. Please note:
  - a. Do not include an excessive number of extra acceptances and titles.
  - b. Validated extra acceptances and titles will be transferred to the Verified Acceptances and Verified Titles pages of the spreadsheet by the Star Ratings Director so that they can be used in your next Star application.

- c. Your Star Rating Merit Award certificates will indicate the required number of acceptances and the minimum number of titles needed to achieve that Star level (regardless of how many acceptances and titles you had verified on the application).
- d. Extra verified acceptances for used titles included on a 5th Star application will *not* be applied to the 1st Galaxy or any subsequent Galaxy because all titles for each Galaxy and Diamond rating must be new.
  - i. If you include excess titles and acceptances on a 5<sup>th</sup> Star application, place them at the end of the lists rather than the normal alphabetical order so the Star Ratings Director can easily identify them and not verify them if they are not needed for your 5<sup>th</sup> Star. This will prevent you from losing them when you proceed to the Galaxy Awards.
  - ii. Unused new titles and new acceptances will be set aside so that you can decide whether to use them on Galaxy applications.

### **Data Accuracy and Error Correction**

- 28. The accuracy of your acceptances history and the accuracy of information you submit on Star Ratings applications is your responsibility.
- 29. It is recommended that you maintain your master acceptance lists and titles lists as an electronic spreadsheet in a format similar to the spreadsheets that must be submitted with your Star Ratings applications. You should update your data immediately upon receipt of official results from each exhibition. This will make it easier to sort your data, and to compile your lists at the time you apply for a new Star Rating. Backup your files in several places. Further suggestions for record keeping are given in *Guidelines for Using the Star Applications Spreadsheet* that you can download from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website.
- 30. The principal source of information used to verify acceptances and titles earned after December 31, 2012, is the Exhibition Data Acceptances Spreadsheet (EDAS) sent to PSA by each exhibition organizer. If you are claiming acceptances gained prior to that date, you may be asked to supply alternative forms of reasonable proof of acceptances and titles (such as scanned pages of catalogues).
- 31. The EDAS documents are not due at PSA until 30 days after the judging of each exhibition. They are then distributed to Star Ratings Directors. Therefore, you should wait at least two months after the judging date of an exhibition before including an acceptance from that exhibition on a Star Rating application.
- 32. It is your responsibility to check all information you receive from an exhibition and request corrections when errors are found. You should follow these steps for each exhibition that you enter:
  - a. Check the information you type in on-line entry forms.
  - b. As soon as you receive your official results, check that information for accuracy. If there is an error, immediately correspond with the exhibition chairman and ask for the corrections to be made *before* the exhibition sends the EDAS to PSA.
  - c. Check the accuracy of your results again when you receive or download the exhibition catalog. If any errors you previously reported have not been corrected, or if the information is not the same as your results notification, immediately correspond with the exhibition chairman or secretary to that a request a correction.
- 33. If an exhibition agrees that it made an error in the information it provided to PSA then you should request the exhibition to provide the PSA EDAS Director with the corrected data.

34. When you apply for Star Ratings, you will be notified of any discrepancies between the information provided to PSA by exhibitions and the information you provide. It is your responsibility to try to resolve any differences between the information the exhibition provided PSA and the information it provided to you. This can be difficult, particularly if several years have passed between the date of the exhibition and the time you submit your Star Ratings application. In exceptional circumstances, a Star Ratings Director may request that you provide other forms of reasonable proof of acceptances and titles.

### **Star 5 / Galaxy Considerations**

35. Once Star 5 has been achieved in a Division or Class, all titles claimed and verified for Star 1 through Star 5 in that Division or Class are retired and those titles cannot be used for Galaxy or Diamond awards in that Division/Class. (Note: The 3D Division has a 6th Star and it has an alternative to Galaxy/Diamond awards.)
36. The full rules for Galaxy and Diamond ratings are described in the Galaxy-Diamond Application Instructions that can be downloaded from the PSA website. It is important to note that there are limits on how many acceptances can be claimed for each title.
37. You cannot apply for Galaxy 1 in a Division or Class until you have received notification that your Star 5 rating in that Division or Class has been awarded.
38. Star 1 – 5 Awards have no restrictions on the number of acceptances that can be claimed for each title. Because Star 5 requires at least 96 different titles you may find that you do not need to use all the acceptances that you have gained from some titles to reach the total of 288 acceptances. However, any excess acceptances that you have for titles used in a Star 5 application will be lost – you will *not* be able to use them in a Galaxy application in that Division or Class. Therefore, it is advisable to think carefully about your exhibition entries as you approach the number of acceptances needed for Star 5. If you keep your average number of acceptances per title close to three you will minimize how many titles and acceptances you stand to lose when your titles are retired when you reach Star 5.

### **Star Ratings Certificates and Verified Records**

39. When you are notified that a Star application has been successful you will also be informed of what information you will need to submit with your next application in that Division or Class.
40. You will receive an Award of Merit certificate for each Star Rating that is validated by the relevant Star Ratings Director. These certificates will be emailed to you, but you may request a paper copy.
41. It is important to keep a copy of each application you submit, each Star Rating certificate you receive and any other correspondence you receive from the Star Ratings Director.

### **Application Fee**

42. The current fee for processing *each* Star Rating is US\$12.00. There is no fee difference between USA residents and residents of other countries.
  - a. If you are applying for more than 1 Star at a time, multiply the number of Stars for which you are applying by the fee for one Star. For example, if you applied for Stars 2-3 at the same time the fee would be \$24.
  - b. Fees must be in *USA dollars only*.
  - c. The preferred method of payment is PayPal. You do not need your own PayPal account to pay via PayPal, just a valid Master Card, Discover, Visa, or American Express credit card; or a Visa debit card.

- d. After the Director has verified your data and finalized your award level you will be sent an email with the PayPal link to make your payment. PayPal payments must be submitted using this link. Do NOT use a PayPal link provided for a prior application or for another Division, as your payment will not get credited.
- e. If you are unable to pay with PayPal please contact the relevant Star Ratings Director *before* you submit your application and arrange payment by an alternative method.
- f. If you live in a country whose government blocks the use of PayPal please contact the relevant Star Ratings Director to arrange an alternative method of payment.

**Credits for Annual Division Competitions**

- 43. Some Divisions hold annual photo essay (or similar) competitions for PSA members only. The results are generally shown as a program at the annual PSA Conference. These annual competitions are not International Exhibitions and are not credited toward PSA's annual Who's Who in Photography. However, award-winning entries in these annual competitions are eligible to earn acceptance credits and title credits for Star Ratings 1 through 5 in the same Division or Class as the Photo Essay. Use of these credits towards Galaxies is dealt with in Galaxy-Diamond Application Instructions.
- 44. In PID, PJD, ND and PTD, each photo essay winning a Medal or HM receives four (4) acceptance credits and two (2) title credits when used in an application for Stars 1 through 5. The 3D Division has a Sequence competitions that runs under different rules, so please refer to the 3DD section of the PSA website for details.
- 45. No more than eight (8) essay acceptance credits and four (4) essay title credits can be claimed in each Division or Class for any calendar year.
- 46. Refer to Appendix F for an example of how to format your Photo Essay credits on your Acceptance List and your Titles List. If in doubt, contact the relevant Star Ratings Director.
- 47. You must include a copy of the official results email that you received from the Photo Essay Competition Director with your Star application.

**Judging Credits**

- 48. Some *acceptance* credits may be earned for judging a PSA recognized section or sections of an international exhibition.
- 49. The number of credits that can be claimed depends on the number of judges on the panel and the number of sections judged in each separate exhibition:

Size of Judging Panel	1 Section Judged	2 or more Sections Judged
3 judges	3 credits	6 credits
4-5 judges	2 credits	4 credits
6-10 judges	1 credit	2 credits
More than 10 judges	0 credits	0 credits

- 50. Judging credits must be claimed in the same Division or Class as the section judged. For example, if you were a member of a 3-person judging panel that judged both a Nature and a Wildlife section at the same exhibition you may be eligible to claim 6 judging credits on your Acceptances list for Stars 3, 4 or 5 (see the following two paragraphs).
- 51. You will not necessarily be able to use all the judging credits that you earn, particularly if you use them on a Star 1 or 2 application.



52. The maximum number of judging credits that can be claimed for a Star Rating is 10% of the qualifying acceptances for that Star Rating or 25, *whichever is the lesser*. The cumulative maximum number of judging credits that can be claimed in each Star Path are:

Star Rating	Cumulative Maximum No. of Judging Credits that can be claimed
Star 1	2
Star 2	4
Star 3	7
Star 4	14
Star 5	25

If, for example, you are applying for Star 3 in Nature Division and you have not previously claimed any judging credits in that Division, you can claim a maximum of 7 judging credits. However, if you had previously claimed 4 judging credits for Star 2 in Nature Division you could claim only an additional 3 judging credits on your Star 3 application (to take the cumulative total to 7).

53. No *title* credits may be earned for judging International Exhibitions.
54. A judging credit for an exhibition may be used only once.
55. All allowable judging credits earned for a Division or Class at one exhibition must be claimed on the same Star Rating application.
56. Refer to Appendix E for an example of how to format your claim for Judging Credits on your Acceptance list. You will have to provide evidence to support your claim for judging credits. Normally this will be a scan of the cover and relevant pages of the catalogue for the exhibition at which you judged.

## **PART B – SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR EACH DIVISION and CLASS**

### **PROJECTED IMAGE DIVISION – COLOR CLASS**

In addition to the general rules in Part A of this document, there are additional rules for Star Ratings applications in PIDC because of the possibility of claiming acceptances from the discontinued CSD, EID and CPID divisions. On the Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet there is a separate column on the New Acceptances Page and on the New Titles page where you can indicate the Division in which the acceptance was received.

If you had received Star Ratings in either EID or CPID there was an opportunity (up until 31st December 2017) to convert those Star Ratings to PIDC Star Ratings. If you had this type of conversion approved and you want to use ‘conversion credits’ on a new Star application in PIDC please contact a Star Ratings Director in PIDC for instructions before you submit your application.

If you had acceptances in EID or CPID that were not used as part of a conversion to PIDC Stars you can include those acceptances on a PIDC Star application and indicate EID or CPID in the relevant column on the application spreadsheet. If you have any questions about this process please contact a Star Ratings Director in PIDC for instructions before you submit your application.

### **PROJECTED IMAGE DIVISION – MONOCHROME CLASS**

The only acceptances that can be used in this Star path are acceptances gained in sections of exhibitions that have been recognised by the Projected Image Division-Monochrome Class (PIDM). Acceptances from monochrome images entered in sections of exhibitions that have been recognised by the Projected Image Division-Color Class (PIDC) cannot be used in this Star path.

### **NATURE DIVISION**

The Nature Division has a single Star path. Acceptances received in PSA recognized exhibition sections that are designated as “Nature” or “Wildlife” or a ND recognized theme section (such as “Birds”) can all be used on Star applications in ND. Acceptances received for both color and monochrome images in Nature sections can be included on the Star applications in ND. Acceptances received in both print and digital Nature sections can be included on the same Star application.

Acceptances for ‘nature’ images in other sections (such as PIDC) cannot be used on Star applications in the Nature Division.

### **PHOTOJOURNALISM DIVISION**

The Photojournalism Division has a single Star path so acceptances received in PSA recognized exhibition sections that are designated as “Photojournalism” or “Social Documentary” or a PJ recognized theme section (such as “Sport”) can all be used on the same Star application. Acceptances received for both color and monochrome PJ images can be included on the same Star application. Acceptances received in both print and digital PJ sections can be included on the same Star application.

Under certain circumstances, the Photojournalism Division grants acceptance credits for published photographs. For all star ratings in the Photojournalism Division up to 40% of the required titles and acceptances may be from published photographs in a traditionally printed (hard copy) publication with a distribution of at least 2,500 copies. Photographs appearing in catalogs or other publications distributed by electronic media are not eligible. Images printed in PSA recognized catalogs dated prior to January 1, 2009, can also be counted as acceptances. Contact the PJ Star Ratings Director for further information before claiming credits for published photographs.

### **PHOTO TRAVEL DIVISION**

The Photo Travel Division has a single Star path so acceptances received in PSA recognized exhibition sections that are designated as “Photo Travel” or a PT recognized theme section (such as “People”) can all be used on the same Star application. Acceptances received for both color and monochrome PT images can be included on the same Star application. Acceptances received in both print and digital Photo Travel sections can be included on the same Star application.

### **PICTORIAL PRINT DIVISION – ALL CLASSES**

The PPD has separate Star paths for Large Color Prints, Large Monochrome Prints, Small Color Prints and Small Monochrome Prints. If you have previously been awarded Stars in any of the PPD classes, your paperwork for those stars will be in the central file and you do not need to submit it with your application. PPD does not accept credit card payments; you can use PayPal (preferred) or a check payable at a US bank.

### **3D DIVISION**

In addition to the 5 Stars that are common to all Divisions and Classes, 3D Division has a 6th Star that requires 488 acceptances from at least 120 titles. 3DD also has a series of Master awards instead

of the Galaxy/Diamond awards available in other Divisions. The specific requirements for these 3DD awards are available in the 3DD section of the PSA website.

*If you have any questions about the specific requirements for a Division or Class it is important to contact the relevant Star Ratings Director by email **before** you submit your application.*

## APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

**Classes.** Some of the PSA Divisions are subdivided into Classes. The Projected Image Division has two Classes; the Color Class (PIDC) and the Monochrome Class (PIDM). The Pictorial Print Division has four Classes – Large Color Prints (CPA), Small Color Prints (CPB), Large Monochrome Prints (MPA) and Small Monochrome Prints (MPB). When a Division is subdivided into Classes, each Class has a separate Star Path.

**Divisions.** PSA is organized into six Divisions – Projected Image Division (PID), Photojournalism Division (PJD), Nature Division (ND), Photo Travel Division (PTD), Pictorial Print Division (PPD) and 3D Division. Except for PID and PPD, each Division has a single Star Path, regardless of the media (digital, slide, print) of the image.

**Ethical Standards.** Members applying for Star Ratings must follow the Ethical Standards set out in Appendix C of this document. Failure to comply with these standards may result in loss of PSA membership and/or loss of honors, distinctions and awards received as a member of PSA.

**Galaxy and Diamond Ratings.** In each Division and Class (other than 3D) acceptances gained after a 5 Star Rating has been awarded can be applied toward Galaxy and Diamond Ratings (subject to specific rules). The requirements for Galaxy and Diamond Ratings are described in the Galaxy-Diamond Application Instructions that can be downloaded from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website.

**Star Rating.** This is the process that PSA uses to progressively verify and acknowledge a member's acceptances in *PSA recognized international exhibitions*.

**Star Rating Application Spreadsheet.** This is the Excel spreadsheet on which all Star Ratings applications are made. A separate spreadsheet must be used for each Division and Class. The spreadsheet can be downloaded from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website. Guidelines for Using the Star Applications Spreadsheet can be downloaded from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website.

**Star Rating Award of Merit.** As each Star Rating is approved a Star Ratings Award of Merit is issued to acknowledge the member's achievement. These certificates can later be used as proof of verified acceptances when a member applies for Recognition of Photographic Achievement (ROPA) distinctions.

**Star Ratings Directors.** These are the people who have responsibility for processing Star Ratings applications. They are appointed by the Divisional Chairs and their contact details are under the Stars/ROPA menu item on the PSA website.

**Star Path.** This is the common term for a Division or Class in which Star Ratings can be earned. Each Star Path has a set of rules and conditions that must be met for a member to progress through the Star Ratings. The general procedures are the same in each Division and Class and they are described in Part A of this document. Some Divisions and Classes have a small number of special requirements in addition to the general procedures and they are described in Part B of this document.

**APPENDIX B: TABLE OF ACCEPTANCE AND TITLE REQUIREMENTS\*\***

<b>Star Rating</b>	<b>Required No. Acceptances</b>	<b>Minimum No. Required Titles</b>	<b>Explanation / Instructions</b>
<b>1st</b>	18	6	All titles and acceptances are new.
<b>2nd</b>	36	12	<i>Retain</i> the 6 old titles and 18 old acceptances. <i>Add</i> 6 new titles and 18 new acceptances.
<b>3rd</b>	72	24	<i>Retain</i> the 12 old titles and 36 old acceptances. <i>Add</i> 12 new titles and 36 new acceptances.
<b>4th</b>	144	48	<i>Retain</i> the 24 old titles and 72 old acceptances. <i>Add</i> 24 new titles and 72 new acceptances.
<b>5th</b>	288	96	<i>Retain</i> the 48 old titles and 144 old acceptances. <i>Add</i> 48 new titles and 144 new acceptances.
<b>3DD only 6th</b>	488	120	<i>Retain</i> the 96 old titles and 288 old acceptances. <i>Add</i> 24 new titles and 200 new acceptances.

\*\*NOTE: This table illustrates how you obtain Stars *in each separate Division or Class*.

## APPENDIX C: PSA ETHICAL PRACTICES

The following ethics statement applies to all PSA members. Please read it and comply with it on all applications for Star Ratings.

A person participating in activities of the Photographic Society of America (PSA) or activities recognized by PSA shall act in accordance with all PSA policies, both as written and as obviously intended, without reservation. All participants shall be honest in performing and reporting services to the Society. Participants shall be ethical in making and presenting photographic images. Participants not in compliance with this ethics statement will be subject to sanctions by PSA, including loss of PSA membership and/or awards and honors.

### Photographic Society of America (PSA) Ethics Policy Statement

1.
  - a. Images submitted to competitions shall originate as photographs by the entrant on photographic emulsion or acquired digitally. By virtue of submitting an entry, the photographer certifies the work, including the original capture, as his/her own, including any adjustments or editing of digital image captures\*.
  - b. Each Image must have a unique title. Once an image has been accepted in a PSA-recognized exhibition, that same image, or a like “in camera” or “reproduction” duplicate of that image:
    - i. May not be re-entered in any section of the same Division in that exhibition regardless of media, format, or title.
    - ii. May not be re-titled for entry in any other PSA-recognized exhibition.
    - iii. Monochrome images and Color images from the same image capture shall be considered different images.
  - c. Images submitted in internal competitions, contests, workshops, study groups and the like shall strictly follow these standards, both written and as obviously intended, without reservation.
2. Information included in honors and awards proposals shall be exact and true.
3. Material submitted for possible publication in the PSA Journal and/or the PSA Website shall be solely the work of the author(s)\*. Quotations from other material or gathered orally shall be carefully cited with credits given for all illustrations used, and permission use copyrighted material must be obtained by the author.

\* Note: In this context, work of the maker means that the work does not include any material copyrighted by others or commercial clip art elements, including borders, graphics or photographs. Use of filters, such as those in Photoshop or third party plug-ins such as those by NIK or TOPAZ to create such elements is allowed and is not considered a violation of this ethics statement.

## APPENDIX D: PREPARING AN APPLICATION

All PSA Divisions and Classes now accept Star Ratings applications in electronic form (emailed to the Star Ratings Director). Applications must be submitted on the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* that can be downloaded from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website.

**You will need a separate spreadsheet for each Star Path. You cannot combine applications from different Star Paths (such as PIDC and PIDM).**

The *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* is in Microsoft Excel format. Before using the spreadsheet, please read the *Guidelines for Using the Star Application Spreadsheet* which you can download from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website. This is particularly important if you do not have access to Excel, or if you are not familiar with using spreadsheets.

All Star applications will require you to enter data on these three pages of the spreadsheet:

**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).

*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”.

**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.*

**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 this Division or Class.*

In addition, you may have to enter information on other pages of the spreadsheet if you have previously had a Star applications approved from a submission on a different type of spreadsheet or from a paper submission. The *Guidelines for Using the Star Application Spreadsheet* explain this in detail.

## COMPLETING THE NEW ACCEPTANCES LIST

1. List all the new acceptances that you are claiming for this application. Do not include any acceptances that have been verified in a previous Star application in this Division or Class.
2. Please keep the columns in the order they are on the spreadsheet that you download from the PSA website.
3. It is important that Exhibitions are correctly identified using the exhibition name that is shown in the PSA Journal or on the PSA website Under the Exhibitions>Closed Exhibitions menu.
4. Do NOT preface an exhibition with the word “The” even if it is shown that way in the PSA Journal.
5. Do NOT preface the exhibition with 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc., or the exhibition year even if it is shown that way in the PSA Journal.
6. Do NOT put the year of the exhibition in the Exhibition column.
7. You MUST include the PSA recognition number when available. The correct format to use for the PSA recognition number is “2016 -198”. You can refer to the PSA website’s exhibitions lists for all PSA recognized exhibition numbers from 2010 forward.

8. When listing acceptances earned from a circuit (for example DIGA or Trierenberg), DO NOT separate your data by the individual judgments. List all acceptances for the same title on consecutive rows.
9. When listing the country for a circuit that is judged in more than one country, enter the country that is shown on the PSA website (or Journal) for that circuit as the circuit will have just one PSA recognition number.
10. Closing dates of exhibitions determine the year of the exhibition on your Acceptances List, not the year of the judging date or the exhibition showing date.
11. The Acceptance Number column will start with “1” on your Star 1 application in each Division and Class. For your next application in that Division or Class the Acceptance Number column will start with the number that follows the last acceptance number on your last approved acceptance in the Division or Class.
12. DO NOT include any previous validated data from any previous Acceptance List. (There is an exception to this rule for PIDC applications that include CPID or EID conversions – please contact the PIDC Star Ratings Director if you want to claim these conversion credits.)
13. Sort the rows of data first by Year, then alphabetically by Exhibition, then alphabetically by Image Title. The *Guidelines for Using the Star Application Spreadsheet* give detailed instructions about sorting if you need them.

### **COMPLETING THE NEW TITLES LIST**

1. List all the new titles that you are claiming for this application. Do not include any titles that have been verified in a previous Star application in this Division or Class.
2. Check that all these titles appear on your New Acceptances List.
3. Sort the titles alphabetically.

### **WHAT YOU NEED TO SUBMIT WITH YOUR APPLICATION**

What you need to submit with your application will depend on which of the following situations apply.

#### **SITUATION 1 – An application for Star 1 or for multiple Stars including Star 1.**

1. Download the Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet from the PSA website.
2. Complete all details on the “Applicant” page.
3. Complete the “New Titles List” page.
4. Complete the “New Acceptances List” page.
5. Email the completed spreadsheet to the relevant Star Ratings Director.

#### **SITUATION 2 – An application for Stars after a previous application has been verified on the current *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet*.**

1. Use the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* that the SRD returned to you when your previous application was approved.
2. Complete the “New Titles List” page.
3. Complete the “New Acceptances List” page.
4. Email the completed spreadsheet to the relevant Star Ratings Director.

#### **SITUATION 3 – An email application for Stars after previous Stars in that Division or Class have been obtained from an *electronic* submission on a spreadsheet that was different from the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* that is now on the PSA website.**



1. Download the Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet from the PSA website.
2. Complete all details on the “Applicant” page.
3. Complete the “New Titles List” page.
4. Complete the “New Acceptances List” page.
5. Copy your previously verified list of titles to the “Verified Titles List” page.
6. Copy your previously verified list of acceptances to the “Verified Acceptances List” page.
7. Email the completed Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet AND your previously verified application to the relevant Star Ratings Director.

**SITUATION 4 – An email application for Stars when previous Stars in that Division or Class have been obtained from a *paper* submission.**

1. Download the Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet from the PSA website.
2. Complete all details on the “Applicant” page.
3. Complete the “New Titles List” page.
4. Complete the “New Acceptances List” page.
5. On the “Verified Titles List” page enter the *complete* list of titles that were verified on your last approved Star application.
6. Make a legible color scan of the signed/approved Acceptance List and Complete Titles list from your previously approved Star Ratings application.
7. Email the completed Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet and the scan of your previous approval to the relevant Star Ratings Director.

*Note: You do not have to provide proof of membership when you submit your application because the Star Ratings Director will check this on the PSA Member Database. However, before submitting your application you should check that the information in the member database is exactly the same as the information on the ‘Applicant’ page of your application. This is particularly important if there is likely to be any confusion about your name.*

***If you have any questions about these processes, contact the relevant Star Ratings Director before you submit your application.***

## APPENDIX E: FORMAT FOR CLAIMING JUDGING CREDITS

Judging credits should be shown on your New Acceptance List in the following way:

Exhibition	PSA #	Country	Year	Acceptance Number	Title
Maitland	2016-002	Australia	2016	34	Judging Credit
Maitland	2016-002	Australia	2016	35	Judging Credit
Maitland	2016-002	Australia	2016	36	Judging Credit

If you claim judging credits, you will have to send supporting evidence to the Star Ratings Director. This will normally be a scan of the cover and relevant pages of the exhibition catalogue. If this evidence is not available, contact the Star Ratings Director before submitting your application and arrange to provide other evidence.

## APPENDIX F: FORMAT FOR CLAIMING PHOTO ESSAY CREDITS

Photo essay credits should be shown on your Acceptance List in the following way:

Exhibition	PSA #	Country	Year	Acceptance Number	Title
PJ Essay Competition	2015	PSA Conference	2015	43	Award Credit-2015
PJ Essay Competition	2015	PSA Conference	2015	44	Award Credit-2015
PJ Essay Competition	2015	PSA Conference	2015	45	Award Credit-2015

If you claim photo essay credits, you will have to send supporting evidence to the Star Ratings Director. Contact the Star Ratings Director before submitting your application and arrange to provide suitable evidence.

## **APPENDIX G – STARS BUY BACK YEARS EXAMPLES**

*Reason for purchasing Stars Buy Back Years:* To enable you to claim acceptances gained before you joined PSA. [Refer to paragraphs 18-20 for more details.]

*When can you purchase Stars Buy Back Years:* Any time within 5 years of joining PSA – but you can do it only once.

*How many Stars Buy Back Years can you purchase:* A minimum of one year and a maximum of ten years.

### **NEW MEMBERS**

To make the correct decision about how many Star Buy Back Years you need to purchase, you should review *all* the acceptances you have received (in *all* Divisions) before joining PSA.

#### **Example 1:**

A member joins PSA on January 1, 2017.

Prior to joining, the member had received the following acceptances in sections of exhibitions recognised by the PSA Nature Division.

2014 – 8 acceptances from 3 titles.

2015 – 13 acceptance from 6 new titles.

2016 – 12 acceptances from 4 titles that had been accepted in 2014 or 2015.

On a Star 1 application the member could use the 3 titles and 8 acceptances for 2014 plus the 6 titles and 10 of the acceptances from 2015 without needing buy back any years (refer to paragraph 19).

To use the remaining 3 acceptances from 2015 and the acceptances from 2016 on a Star 2 application, the member would have to purchase 2 years of Star Buy Back.

Before purchasing the Stars Buy Back Years, the members should make sure that a buy back of 2 years will also cover the acceptances that they want to use for Star Applications in other Divisions.

#### **Example 2:**

A member joins PSA on January 1, 2017.

Prior to joining, the member had received the following acceptances in sections of exhibitions recognised by the PSA Photojournalism Division.

2005 – 3 acceptances from 3 titles.

2006 – 5 acceptances from 4 new titles.

2007 – 10 acceptances from the 7 titles that were accepted in 2005-06.

2008 – 12 acceptances from 3 new titles.

2009 – 10 acceptances from 6 new titles.

2010 – 5 acceptances from 5 titles that had been used in 2009.

2011 – 15 acceptances from titles used in 2007-2010.

2012 – 5 acceptances from 5 new titles.

2013 – 6 acceptances from titles used in 2010-2012.

2014 – 8 acceptances from 3 titles.

2015 – 13 acceptance from 6 new titles.

2016 – 12 acceptances from 4 titles that had been accepted in 2014 or 2015.

None of the acceptances from 2005 or 2006 can be used because they are outside the 10-year limit for Stars Buy Back.

On a Star 1 application the member could use the 7 titles (and 10 acceptances) from 2007 and 8 of the acceptances from 2008 (preferably using all 3 new titles so that they can continue to be used for future Star applications).

To use the remaining 4 acceptances from 2008 the member would have to purchase 9 years of Star Buy Back.

Alternatively, the member may decide to forego those 4 acceptances from 2008 and buy back only 8 years. This would still give them a total of 100 acceptances and 30 titles that could potentially be used for a Star 3 application (which requires 72 acceptances from at least 24 titles).

If the member purchased 8 years of buy back to cover the acceptances they wanted to use in Photojournalism, that buy back would also cover any acceptances that they were eligible to use from 2009 onwards in each of the other Divisions.

## **MEMBERS REJOINING AFTER A BREAK IN MEMBERSHIP**

### **Example:**

A member joined in November 2005 and remained a member for 5 years until November 2010. During that time, they earned 3 Stars in PIDC and 2 Stars in Nature.

They had a break in their membership and renewed in November 2016 (a break of 6 years). Between June 2012 and November 2016 the member continued to gain acceptances in PIDC and ND and also gained acceptances in PIDM.

In order to claim the acceptances they earned in PIDC and ND while they were not a member, they would have to purchase 5 years of Stars Buy Back.

That buy back would also enable them to claim eligible acceptances they had earned in PIDM (or any other Division or Class) during their buy-back period. Of course, those acceptances would have to be claimed in the relevant Star Path.

<p>If you have any questions about the Star Buy Back Years program please contact the relevant Star Ratings Director BEFORE you purchase any Buy Back Years because you can make this purchase only ONCE.</p>
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## APPENDIX H: STAR RATINGS APPLICATION CHECKLIST

PSA Ethics Statement read and followed.	
“Applicant” page of spreadsheet completed and personal information checked on the PSA member database.	
“New Titles List” page completed, checked and sorted.	
“New Acceptances List” page completed, checked and sorted.	
Spreadsheet saved in the correct format with the correct file name.	
Any additional information (such as previously verified Star Applications) scanned and ready to send.	
Ready to pay fees with PayPal or have made other arrangements with Star Ratings Director.	
Application and any other required information emailed to the correct Star Ratings Director using the contact details on the PSA website.	
PayPal payment made after the Star Ratings Director provided the payment link.	