

Letters to the Editor

Application Process for Star Ratings

I hold stars in all Divisions except 3D and find that the application process is basically the same in all divisions but there are small differences that make the process very time consuming in order to be sure I complete the process correctly for each Division.

My suggestions for improving the whole application process are:

- Have all divisions accept electronic applications.
- Have the Division leadership put their heads together to reach a common process.
- Keep the same process even when Division Directors change.

I have found that the Nature Division has a pre-made Excel spreadsheet with appropriate format and cells for all required information that can be sent electronically. It is easy to use and to me is the ideal way to go.

Leif Alveen, EPSA

Thank you for your thoughtful letter. I shared it with **Dan Charbonnet, FPSA, EPSA**, the VP for Exhibition Services, and the rest of the board. The PSA Board has discussed having more standard practices and continues to work with the division leaders to try to reach this goal.

One of the main reasons that this is difficult to achieve is that PSA is made up of volunteers, some of whom have been working with exhibitions for years. Over the years each division has developed its own way of doing things. Because we value our volunteers and want them to continue working for PSA, we must allow them to be involved in the processes they use and coming to an agreement to change these processes takes time. However, Dan told me that "Exhibition Services has been working with the SRDs (Star Ratings Directors) to move towards common procedures and progress is being made." **Dana Vannoy, FPSA, MPSA**, VP for Divisions, has assured me that PSA will soon have a standard application used by all Divisions.

I appreciate your suggestions and want you to know that this kind of letter can be very helpful for making things happen more quickly. We like to hear what members think.

Margaret Sprott, APSA,
VP for Publications

On the PSA Website

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Entering PSA Competitions

Participating in a PSA competition is a huge benefit of PSA membership. It gives photographers the chance to compete individually and through clubs, providing an unbiased assessment of their work. The PSA website can help you choose the best competition for you, provide guidelines on how to enter, give links for uploading of images, and display the results. It also shows the efforts from the past few years' worth of competitions, so you can see the type of images that win awards and honorable mentions.

To get a great overview of every PSA competition, select the Competitions link from any page on the PSA website or go to: <http://www.psa-photo.org/index.php?psa-competition-dates>. The left pane of this webpage has a link to every PSA competition information page, and the bottom of the right pane has a revolving calendar of closing dates for competitions.

Club Competitions

Interclub competitions are held in each division and you must be a member of a registered PSA-member club in order to participate in an interclub competition. September is a good time to plan out a year's worth of competitions, since the competitions begin officially in October and run through May or June. Interclub competitions are usually held over three or four rounds; one every few months. For a complete list of all the interclub competitions, their guidelines, contact people, and registration and deadlines for each round, go to: <http://www.psa-photo.org/index.php?interclub-comparison-chart>. The Interclub Deadline chart shows a neat schedule of each division's deadlines as well: <http://www.psa-photo.org/index.php?interclub-deadline-chart>

Aside from Interclub Competitions, Clubs and Councils hold three annual competitions: the Club, Council & Chapter Newsletter Competition, <http://www.psa-photo.org/index.php?clubs-councils/newsletter-contest> begins March 1 and ends June 1, the Club, Council & Chapter Website Contest, <http://www.psa-photo.org/index.php?clubs-councils/web-site-contest>, begins January 15 and closes March 15, and the Councils' Challenge, a photo competition among Councils, Federations and Associations, opens March 1 and closes June 15. Information on each is available on the pages indicated, along with links to winners from the past competitions.

Individual Competitions

Most divisions offer competitions for individual PSA members – no club affiliation necessary. To find out information on these competitions, go to the division's home page, and look under the section that says "Programs for Individuals." Many divisions have a best of the year competition and some, such as the Projected Image Division, have a Portrait competition. The Pictorial Print Division has a new competition for photographers who create their own photo books. Many divisions offer photo essay competitions.

To see a list of winners and winning images from past competitions, click the Competitions Link and then access the season's competitions. The 2014-15 Season's Competitions can be found at: <http://www.psa-photo.org/index.php?2014-15-competition-season>. The results for each competition can also be accessed from the competition information page on the site as well. For example, results from the Photo Travel Division's Interclub competitions from 2009 through 2015 can be found on the PTD Interclub Competition page: <http://www.psa-photo.org/index.php?divisions-photo-travel-interclub-competition>

Before entering any competition, feel free to contact the competition's director. If your PSA-member photo club is a member, be sure to check out the date you must register before entering—registration dates are usually in October or November. If your club is not yet a PSA member, why not encourage them to join PSA?

Most importantly, have fun and let the games begin! ■