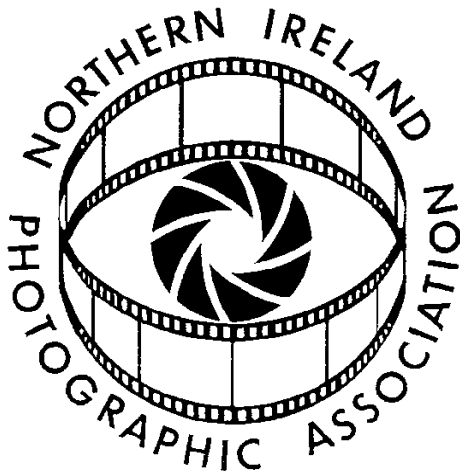


Northern Ireland Photographic Association



Competition Guidelines and Rules

www.nipphoto.co.uk

Member of the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain.
Affiliated to La Fédération Internationale de l'Art Photographique

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Introduction

The 'Competitions and Exhibitions Committee' is appointed by the NIPA Council to handle and manage all aspects of competitions and exhibitions, in best interest of the Association. They ensure fair play and compliance with the rules and Standard Conditions of Entry as set out in Annex A.

The Competitions Committee reserves the right to withdraw an entry from competition that is considered not compliant with the rules. Codes of Conduct for Judges, Clubs and Entrants are set out below. The purpose is to clarify and expand on the roles and responsibilities to ensure that all NIPA Competitions are open and fair to everyone participating and be helpful to all concerned.

Codes of Conduct

Code of Conduct for NIPA Judges

At club level:

1. As a *NIPA judge*, the individual is representing and acting as an ambassador for the Northern Ireland Photographic Association. They will be expected to conduct themselves in the most professional manner possible at all times and act in good faith in delivering NIPA's aim of '*promoting photography in all its aspects*'.
2. As a *NIPA judge*, the individual is will be expected to maintain a record of the Club and Association competitions they have judged/selected. The NIPA Competitions Secretary may request a copy of this record as evidence of their suitability for judging/selecting Competitions/Exhibitions on behalf of NIPA.

At the NIPA level:

3. The NIPA scoring system for Inter-club competitions is one (1) to five (5). The scoring system and subsequent allocation of stars depends on these image being judged as a group of images and only judged against the other images in the group. The following scores should be used as a guidance:
 - 1 = very weak images within this group
 - 2 = below average images within this group
 - 3 = average images within this group
 - 4 = better than average images within the group
 - 5 = the best images within the group

The aim of the exercise is to rank this group of images from top to bottom. Your score, together with the scores from two other judges will be added to give a score out of 15. Stars will be awarded to all images scoring 13 or more. It should be noted that if 5's are not allocated, then stars can't be awarded. It takes at least one 5 from a judge to achieve a score of 13.

NIPA judges are expected to know the standard of what a 3, or average, image is. They

have been asked to judge at NIPA level as he/she regularly judges at local clubs. It is through this experience that he/she should be able to assess what an average club image is.

4. There are no set limits on the number of high scores a judge should give in each round.
5. The images in each round are in competition with each other, they are not in competition with similar, perhaps better, images of the same location, approach, etc. This is important and it is why all the images entered into the competition are seen by the judges prior to scoring.
6. All information relating to the entrants and their clubs will remain confidential between the Northern Ireland Photographic Association (NIPA) and the judge.
7. The results and any outcomes of the NIPA judging session will remain confidential until the official announcement of the 'starred entries' and/or award winners.
8. With the exception of material already published on NIPA's website, the judge shall not disclose any information in any form to any third party, nor use this information for their own or a third party's benefit.
9. It is the judge's responsibility to abstain from judging an entry that he/she is associated with or prejudiced for/against. If the judge feels that he/she cannot be as objective or consistent a judge as possible, then he/she must abstain from judging any entry in question and to bring it to the attention of the NIPA Competitions Secretary.

Code of Conduct for Clubs

10. All clubs are different; but in most cases it will be either the 'Club Competitions Secretary' or the clubs 'NIPA Council Member' who prepares the club entry, prior to it being submitted to NIPA. Only entries from a fully paid-up member of a NIPA affiliated club are eligible for submission to NIPA Competitions/exhibitions.
11. If an entrant is a member of two or more clubs, they can only submit an entry to the NIPA Inter-Club competition from one club in any given season.
12. Care must be taken to ensure that all images comply with the 'Image Format Definition' of Monochrome prints, Colour prints, and Projected Digital Images (PDIs). Prints placed in the wrong category will be excluded from competition. PDIs failing to comply with the definition; for example, the wrong file format (e.g., .tiff or .psd) or outside the required pixel dimensions - will be excluded from competition.
13. It is essential that prints are properly mounted (so that they don't fall apart), are correctly labeled and transported in the heavy-duty plastic folders (as provided by NIPA). Prints incorrectly labeled will be excluded from competition.
14. It is the responsibility of clubs to ensure that entrants are placed in the most appropriate section, 'Novice' or 'Advanced'. This is essential; to ensure a level playing field, 'Novices' should only be competing against fellow novices.
15. Member's circumstances and ability can and will change as the season progresses. It is possible that the standard of work produced by someone who starts the season as a 'Novice' will, as the season progresses, start to produce '*work which is obviously of an advanced standard*'. If this is the case it is the responsibility of the club to ensure that such work is not entered under the status of Novice. Clearly; this is best addressed by

the club, rather than NIPA excluding the novice entry from competition at the judging session.

Code of Conduct for Entrants

16. Entrants must be a fully paid-up member of their club to enter NIPA Competitions/Exhibitions.
17. All photography and post processing must be the work of the entrant, and they cannot use any image or part of an image belonging to someone else. See Annex E for guidance.
18. Entrants must carefully prepare their entry to comply with the 'Image Format Definition' of Monochrome prints, Colour prints, and Projected Digital Images (PDIs).
19. Entrants must clearly identify their entry as either 'Novice' or 'Advanced'.
20. Unless stated otherwise in writing; it will be assumed that the entrant's print or projected digital image may be used to promote or represent NIPA for publicity, or in other competitions, exhibitions, events, etc.

Inter-club Print and Projected Digital Image Competition Rules

21. There are five rounds in each competition.
22. There are three competition sections:
 - Monochrome Print
 - Colour Print
 - Projected Digital Images (PDI)
23. In all rounds of the competition, a club may submit up to 4 Mono prints, 4 Colour prints and 4 projected digital images.
24. Each will incorporate a Principal section and a Novice section.
25. The definition of a Novice can be found in Annex B.
26. Unless specified otherwise, then titles must not appear on the front of prints or within the image area of a PDI
27. In each section any number of entries may be by novices, but not more than 3 may be by advanced photographers.
28. No image may be entered which is essentially the same, or so similar as to be essentially the same, as any previous entry in any category of any Inter-club competition round.
29. The club ID code will be provided by NIPA before the competition round.
30. PDIs must be submitted online, as outlined on the NIPA website
31. Prints should be on mounts of 30cm x 40cm, or smaller.
32. In all cases the print size must be equal to, or smaller than, the mount size.
33. Submitted print entries must not have any Velcro on the back of the print. Inkjet prints can be irreversibly damaged by Velcro.
34. Submission of an entry confirms acceptance of these rules.
35. The three highest individual scores of the four images in each category, will make up the total score for the category.
36. In each round, an entry scoring 13 or more marks will be awarded a 'star'.
37. Labels provided by NIPA must be attached on the back of each print mount to show:
 - Name of Club

- Entrant's Name
 - Title of print (untitled is not acceptable as a title)
 - Subject of round
 - Number and Year of round
 - Reference letter on NIPA entry forms as follows :
 - 1st print - Ref A
 - 2nd print - Ref B
 - 3rd print - Ref C
 - 4th print - Ref N (must be a Novice print)
 - If any of the prints A to C are by Novices this should be indicated by the suffix N, e.g. B(N)
38. Entries of prints plus relevant entry forms must be brought or forwarded to the appropriate Council meeting as notified annually on page 2 of the current NIPA handbook.
39. All starred prints will be retained by NIPA to form a portfolio, which will be available on loan to member clubs.
40. Non-starred prints will be available for collection at the Council meeting following the round for which they were entered. Entries cannot be returned at Inter-club evenings. Clubs are asked to ensure that packing of entries is adequate. A signature to verify receipt of returned entries may be required upon collection.
41. A further competition will be held to decide the individual 'Top Images'. This competition will consist solely of the starred images selected from the season's rounds.
42. All trophies will be held from the date of the presentation until their return is requested by Council.
43. Unless the entrant states otherwise in writing; it will be assumed that any print or projected digital image may be used to promote or represent NIPA for publicity, or in other competitions, exhibitions, events, etc.

Annual Novice Competition Rules

44. The Novice Competition is to encourage genuine novices to submit work at a competitive level. Unless all those submitting entries observe the spirit of the competition, it fails to achieve that objective and will discourage genuine novices. The competition is open to those photographers who comply with the NIPA definition of a novice, which can be found in Annex B.
45. There are three categories
- Monochrome Prints
 - Colour Prints
 - Projected Digital Images (PDI).
46. Each entrant may submit up to 8 prints (4 Mono and 4 Colour) and 4 PDIs.
47. Entries are due on the date stipulated on page 2 of the current NIPA handbook.

48. Prints must be mounted. The mounts may be of any colour, but must not exceed 30cm x 40cm in size. The print size must be equal to, or smaller than the mount size. The back of the mount *must* show:
- Entrant's Name
 - Name of Club
 - Title of print (Untitled is not acceptable as a title)
49. Projected Digital Images will be submitted online as described on the NIPA website. All images submitted online must conform to the PDI definition as in Annex C.
50. Each image must be titled with the following information, in this order:
- 50.1. "Image title_name of entrant_club.jpg".
51. In all cases images will be projected as submitted online.
52. Submission of an entry confirms acceptance of the rules and the definition of 'Novice', as outlined in Annex B.
53. The competitions will be judged by three judges, nominated by the NIPA Competitions Secretary.
54. The judges will decide the 1st, 2nd and 3rd places and may commend any entry, which they deem worthy.
55. The prints and Projected Images will be displayed at a Novice competition. The results will then be delivered by the judges with appropriate comments on their choice and marks.
56. The entrant of the winning monochrome print will be awarded the NIPA Novice's Shield.
57. The entrant of the winning colour print will be awarded the NIPA Novices Colour Print Trophy.
58. The entrant of the winning Projected Digital Image will be awarded the NIPA Novice Projected Image Trophy.
59. Trophies will be held from the date of their presentation until their return is requested by Council.
60. The prints entered by members of any one Club will be available for collection as an integral unit at the Council meeting following the competitions.
61. Unless the entrant states otherwise in writing; it will be assumed that any print or projected digital image may be used to promote or represent NIPA for publicity, or in other competitions, exhibitions, events, etc.

Roy Finlay Memorial Natural History Competition Rules

62. The Roy Finlay Memorial Natural History Competition is a unique competition organized by NIPA in conjunction with Ards Camera Club. In moving to align with the new agreed common definition of nature photography (detailed below) we note that (2.2.) *"Images used in Nature Photography competitions may be divided into two classes: Nature and Wildlife"*. In memory of Roy Finlay the competition will remain focused on Wildlife and therefore only entries which fall within the new common definition of the Wildlife class will be accepted and not those in the wider Nature class.
63. Three of the world's largest international photography organisations have devised a common definition for nature photography. The Photographic Society of America (PSA) which represents 6500 members and 470 clubs, the Fédération Internationale de l'Art Photographique (FIAP) which represents more than 85 national associations (including the PAGB) and The Royal Photographic Society (RPS) will all use the same definition for nature categories for their respective competitions and exhibitions.

Nature Photography Definition

64. Nature photography is restricted to the use of the photographic process to depict all branches of natural history, except anthropology and archaeology, in such a fashion that a well-informed person will be able to identify the subject material and certify its honest presentation. The story telling value of a photograph must be weighed more than the pictorial quality while maintaining high technical quality. Human elements shall not be present, except where those human elements are integral parts of the nature story such as nature subjects, like barn owls or storks, adapted to an environment modified by humans, or where those human elements are in situations depicting natural forces, like hurricanes or tidal waves. Scientific bands, scientific tags or radio collars on wild animals are permissible. Photographs of human created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domestic animals, or mounted specimens are ineligible, as is any form of manipulation that alters the truth of the photographic statement.
65. Images used in Nature Photography competitions may be divided in two classes: Nature and Wildlife.
- 65.1. Images entered in Nature category meeting the Nature Photography Definition above can have landscapes, geologic formations, weather phenomena, and extant organisms as the primary subject matter. This includes images taken with the subjects in controlled conditions, such as zoos, game farms, botanical gardens, aquariums and any enclosure where the subjects are totally dependent on man for food.
- 65.2. Images entered in the Wildlife category meeting the Nature Photography Definition above are further defined as one or more extant zoological or botanical organisms free and unrestrained in a natural or adopted habitat. Landscapes, geologic formations, images of zoo or game farm animals, or of any extant zoological or botanical species taken under controlled conditions are not eligible in the Wildlife category. Wildlife is not limited to animals, birds and insects. Marine

subjects and botanical subjects (including fungi and algae) taken in the wild are suitable wildlife subjects, as are carcasses of extant species. Wildlife images may be entered in the Nature category of Exhibitions.

Image processing Do's and Don'ts

Techniques allowed

66. Techniques that enhance the presentation of the image without changing the nature story or the pictorial content, or without altering the content of the original scene, are permitted. These include:
 - Cropping, HDR, Focus stacking, Dodging and Burning
67. Techniques that remove elements added by the camera, such as dust spots, digital noise and film scratches are also allowed.
68. All adjustments must appear natural. Colour images can be converted to monochrome.
69. Global and selective local adjustments are permitted.

Techniques not allowed

70. No techniques that add, relocate, replace or remove pictorial elements, e.g. cloning out or in are permitted (see Edits)
71. Stitched images are not permitted.
72. Infrared images, either direct-captures or derivations are not permitted.

What do the terms 'Adjustments' and 'Edits' actually mean?

73. Adjustments merely alter the existing pixels; they do not remove and replace them. Therefore; global and also selective local adjustments are fine. Nothing has been added in and nothing has been removed. Dodging and burning are techniques that have been used since photography was invented.
74. Edits are the removal of some pixels and replacing them with others. The only occasion where this is allowed is for the removal of dust spots. Clearly this is an 'edit' as pixels are removed and replaced. Any other edit, including 'cloning' is more than just dust removal. It is altering the truth of the image and is not allowed.
75. All entrants must retain their original raw, or jpg, image. NIPA *may* ask for the original image to ensure that the 'Wildlife' definition at 2 above have been fully complied with.

Entries

76. Entrants must be a member of a NIPA affiliated Club.
77. The copyright must belong to the entrant.
78. All entries are on an individual basis (they do not have to be selected by their club).
79. Each entrant may submit up to ten prints and ten projected digital images (PDIs).
80. Prints must be securely mounted with a maximum dimension of a 30cm x 40cm.
81. Each individual print must be labeled on the back of the mount with; factual title only, entrant's name and club.
82. Each print entry collection must be accompanied by a fully completed entry form.
83. PDIs must be in jpg form, sRGB colour space, with a maximum width of 1600 pixels and a maximum height of 1200 pixels.

84. PDIs must be submitted online, as outlined on the NIPA website.
85. The entry fee is £1 per image. Payment options as described on the NIPA website.
86. Submission details and deadlines for all images are as described on the NIPA website.
87. While reasonable care will be taken to protect all print entries; NIPA will not be liable in the event of loss or damage, however caused.
88. Unless the entrant states otherwise in writing; it will be assumed that any print or projected digital image may be used to promote or represent NIPA for publicity, or in other competitions, exhibitions, events, etc.

NIPA Annual Exhibition Rules

89. An entrant must belong to a member club of NIPA.
90. There are three categories: Monochrome prints, Colour prints and PDIs. Entrants may submit up to 4 images in each category.
91. The subject is Open.
92. Prints or PDIs must not have been accepted in a previous NIPA Annual Exhibition.
93. Prints may be any size up to 50 x 40cm and must be mounted. Mounts may be of any colour but must measure 50 x 40cm. The back of the mount must show:
 - The entrant's name
 - The name of the entrant's club
 - The title of the print
94. Projected Digital Images must be submitted online, as outlined on the NIPA website.
95. All images submitted online must conform to the PDI definition as in Annex C.
96. Each image must be titled with the following information, in this order: Image title_name of entrant_club.
97. In all cases images will be projected as submitted online.
98. The right of reproduction will be assumed unless otherwise stated at time of entry.
99. All entries will be treated with every care by the organisers. If a print is lost or destroyed in the course of the exhibition, NIPA's liability will be limited to the cost of materials only, subject to a maximum of £10.
100. Submission of entries will be taken as acceptance of these conditions.
101. Unless the entrant states otherwise in writing; it will be assumed that any print or projected digital image may be used to promote or represent NIPA for publicity, or in other competitions, exhibitions, events, etc.
102. The entry fee is £1.00 for each Print or PDI entered.
103. Prints in this exhibition may be included amongst those being considered for selection as the NIPA entry in the PAGB annual monochrome and colour print competitions and any other competition/exhibition not organised by NIPA)
104. Prints, except those retained for PAGB selection, will be returned to the entrant at the earliest opportunity.

Annex A - Standard conditions of entry

1. These Conditions apply to all Prints / images submitted to all NIPA Competitions and Exhibitions.
2. By submitting an Image in either Print or electronic format to any NIPA competition / exhibition the entrant inherently states that the copyright of the Image is his/her property and is at his sole disposal. If this is not the case NIPA will not accept the Image. Unless the entrant states otherwise in writing; it will be assumed that any print or projected digital image may be used to promote or represent NIPA for publicity, or in other competitions, exhibitions, events, etc.
3. The entrant further agrees that NIPA has permission to make and retain indefinitely in NIPA's Full Electronic Archive (FEA) a digital copy of the Print, and that such a copy image may be used to publicise and promote NIPA, including its use to illustrate club lectures etc. This permission also includes NIPA's right to reproduce, for the above purposes, the image on NIPA's or PAGB's websites, or in any hardcopy published by either organisation. As far as possible the entrant will always be acknowledged when his image is used.

Use of 'Starred' Prints

4. These include all 'starred' prints in Inter-club Competitions and Prints having gained an award in any NIPA Exhibition.
5. The entrant also agrees that if his/her print is awarded a 'star' in a NIPA Inter-club competition, or gains an award (i.e. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, Commended or Highly Commended) in a NIPA Exhibition, the physical print may be retained by NIPA for a period of two years following the year in which the 'star' or 'award' was awarded. Such prints will be included in NIPA's Recent Print Archive (RPA), the loan of which may be requested by any NIPA member club through the NIPA Archivist.
6. If, subsequently, the physical print is selected for the Main Print Archive (MPA) then, with the further permission of the entrant, it will be retained indefinitely in that archive. If the print is not selected for the MPA it will be returned to the club of which the entrant was a member when the print was first entered in NIPA competitions or exhibition, unless he/she is known to be a member of a different club in which case it will be returned to that club.

Return of 'Unstarred' prints

7. Non-starred Prints cannot be returned at Inter-club Evenings. Clubs are asked to ensure that packaging of entries is adequate. A signature to verify the receipt of returned prints may be required upon collection.

For clarification only: The entrant of any print retained as above may always produce a second or copy print for his/her own use.

Annex B - Novice Definition

Introduction

1. A 'Novice' is someone who does not meet the criteria set out below.
2. Details of club members 'Starred' images can be found on the NIPA website. This will be updated following each Inter-club Round, Competition or Exhibition. It is the club's responsibility to use this information, along with any information it may have relating to sub-paragraphs 3b to 3e, to determine if their member qualifies as a 'Novice'.

The Rules

3. A person will no longer be considered a 'Novice' when they:
 - a. Have obtained two 'Starred' entries in any NIPA Competition or Exhibition. For the purposes of this definition, a 1st, 2nd or 3rd place in any NIPA Competition or Exhibition (as listed in Annex D) is considered to be the equivalent of a 'Starred' entry
 - b. Obtain a 3rd level academic photographic qualification
 - c. Obtain a distinction from a National or International photographic body
 - d. Obtain two acceptances in Salons, Open Exhibitions or the PAGB Inter-Federation Annual Print and PDI Competition
 - e. Offer their photographic services, training or skills development for remuneration.
4. At any time, in relation to subsequent NIPA Competitions, the Competition Committee may, in consultation with the club, review the standard of an entrant's photography.

Annex C - Image Format Definition

Monochrome prints

- All black and white and monochrome images are included
- A black and white image which has been modified by the addition of a *single* tone to the *entire* image is defined as a monochrome print

Colour prints

- All images, other than those defined above are defined as colour images
- A black and white image which has been modified by the addition of *partial* toning, or by the addition of one colour to *any* part of the image is defined as a colour print

Projected Digital Images (PDIs)

- Be in jpg format and sRGB colour space
- Maximum file size of 2MB
- Be sized to a maximum of 1600 pixels wide and a maximum of 1200 pixels high
- Any image which does not match the above pixel dimensions will be displayed with a dark grey border

Annex D – NIPA Competitions

Achieving a 1st, 2nd or 3rd in any of the following competitions will be considered the equivalent of a star

- NIPA Exhibition
- NIPA Novice
- Roy Finlay Memorial Natural History Competition

Annex E – Guidance on 'Artificial Intelligence' in Photography

Introduction

This guidance applies directly to all images submitted to NIPA and PAGB competitions and exhibitions.

Principles

How an individual creates an image for their own use, and what source material is coopted for image creation, is entirely at the individual's discretion. However, when an image is submitted alongside the images of others into a competition or exhibition, then each participant needs to be assured that the other participants are using only their own original work.

Images must be entirely the work of the Photographer. In composite images, all component images must meet this requirement. For the avoidance of doubt, use of images from any other source including, but not limited to, royalty free image banks and clipart are not permitted.

There is a distinction between the image content, as described above, and image processing and presentation, which is at the photographer's discretion. Processing can utilise techniques such as selection, noise reduction, calculated textures, montage, HDR, focus stacking and many others. Presentation may include keylines, print paper types, print mounting and others.

Photographers who enter competitions with images which do not comply with this guidance are liable to sanctions under the PAGB Breach of Rules Procedure. This procedure may also apply to events with PAGB Patronage, such as the NIPA Exhibition.

Image Automation

There are now many image processing methods available in camera, or in processing software or in plug-ins for such software, which have been refined or trained by their developers using the characteristics of many images. The list of methods is extremely long with examples such as face-detection focussing, raw conversion, monochrome conversion, noise reduction, focus stacking, HDR, panorama stitching and many more. To the extent that these processes are applied only to the photographer's original image, or to all the photographer's original images in a composite, then they comply with the guidance.

Image Generation

Banks of individual textures and skies have been available for some time and there are software systems which will overlay an imported texture or substitute a sky. Increasingly there are image generator systems which draw on, or have been developed or trained on, content from large image banks to create new images, via a user prompt or specification.

Any importation, whether manual or automated, of all or part of a single image or of a generated image which includes or has been developed from the work of others, means that the resulting image content is not entirely the work of the photographer. The resulting image does not comply with the guidance and is not permitted.

Compliance

It is appreciated that the individual photographer may not be fully aware of exactly how individual processing functions act, whether in-camera or in post-processing. However, NIPA and the PAGB expects photographers to be aware of when any significant addition has been made to an image which is not part of an original work by the photographer.

Annex F - NIPA support for PAGB Inter-Club Competitions

NIPA will support clubs taking part in the annual Print and PDI Inter-Club competitions that are run by the PAGB. This applies to both pre-qualified and nominated clubs.

The maximum any one club can claim, per event, is £200, however this maximum is decreased when more than 2 clubs are competing.

The following limits apply:

- If 1 or 2 clubs are taking part they will be supported up to a value of £200 each
- If 3 clubs are taking part they will be supported up to a value of £135 each
- If 4 clubs are taking part they will be supported up to a value of £100 each

The club(s) should submit a completed claim form in the usual manner.

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