

# Northern Ireland Photographic Association



## Competition Guidelines and Rules

[www.nipphoto.co.uk](http://www.nipphoto.co.uk)

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

Approved by NIPA Council

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## Introduction

The 'Competitions and Exhibitions Committee' is appointed by the NIPA Council to handle and manage all aspects, 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, Camera 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 camera club level:

1. As a *NIPA judge*, you are representing and acting as an ambassador for the Northern Ireland Photographic Association. You will be expected to conduct yourself 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*, you will be expected to maintain a record of how many clubs you have judged with. This is to allow the NIPA Competitions Secretary to assess your capacity to judge at NIPA Level, based on how active you have been in the previous season.

At NIPA level

3. The NIPA scoring system is one to five. 1 means 'well below average', 2 means 'below average', 3 means 'average', 4 means 'above average' and 5 means 'well above average' or 'outstanding'. As a NIPA judge you are expected to know the standard of what a 3, or average, photo is. You have been asked to judge at NIPA level as you are a regular judge at local camera clubs. It is through this experience that you should be able to assess what an average club image is.
4. There are no set rules on how many high or low scores you can give in each round. At a NIPA round, camera clubs have already selected the photos from their winner's; therefore the number of scores of just a 1 is expected to be small. However, if it is a 1 then it's a 1! There are no restriction on the number of 5's scored; if it's a 5, it's a 5!
5. The photos in each round are in competition with each other, they are not in competition with similar, perhaps better, photos of the same location, approach, etc., from anywhere else. This is important and it is why all the images are seen, as a whole, prior to judging.

6. All information relating to the entrants and their camera clubs submitted for assessment will remain confidential between the Northern Ireland Photographic Association (NIPA) and yourself.
7. The results and any outcomes of the NIPA judging session will remain confidential until the announcement of award winners at the adjudication evening.
8. With the exception of material already published on NIPA's website, you shall not disclose any information in any form to any third party, nor use this information for your own or a third party's benefit.
9. It is your responsibility to abstain from judging an entry that you are associated with or prejudiced for/against in any way whatsoever. If you feel that you cannot be as objective or consistent a judge as possible, you must abstain from judging any entry in question and to bring it to the attention of the NIPA Competitions Secretary.

### Code of Conduct for Camera Clubs

10. All clubs are different; but in most cases it will be either the 'Camera Club Competitions Secretary' or their 'NIPA Council Member' that sorts out the images, prior to being submitted to NIPA. All entries must be from a fully paid up member of your club.
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. It is the responsibility of camera clubs to ensure that entrants are placed in the most appropriate category, 'Novice' or 'Advanced'. This is essential; to ensure a level playing field, 'Novices' should only be competing against fellow novices. This is only right and proper.
14. 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 camera club to ensure that such work is not entered under the status of Novice. Clearly; this is best addressed by local camera clubs, rather than having NIPA excluding the novice entry from competition at the judging session.

### Code of Conduct for Entrants

15. You must be a fully paid up member of your camera club to enter NIPA Competitions.
16. All photography and post processing must be your own; you cannot use any image, whatsoever, created by someone else.

17. You must carefully prepare your entry of images to comply with the 'Image Format Definition' of Monochrome prints, Colour prints, and Projected Digital Images (PDIs).
18. You must clearly identify your entry as either 'Novice' or 'Advanced'.
19. Unless you state otherwise in writing; it will be assumed that your 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

20. There are three sections
  - Monochrome Print
  - Colour Print
  - Projected Digital Images (PDI)
21. Each will incorporate a Principal section and a Novice section.
22. The definition of a Novice can be found in the Annex B at the end of this document.
23. There are five rounds in each competition.
24. In all rounds of the competition, a club may submit up to 4 Mono prints, 4 Colour prints and 4 projected digital images, in each category any number of entries may be by novices, but not more than 3 may be by advanced photographers. Prints should be on mounts of 30cm x 40cm, or smaller. In all cases the print size must be equal to, or smaller than, the mount size. The three highest individual scores, of the four images, will create the total score.
25. In each round, a minimum of six placed prints and projected images will each be awarded "Stars".
26. All trophies will be held from the date of the presentation until their return is requested by Council.
27. 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.
28. Each print must show on the back of the mount, using the labels provided by NIPA:
  - Name of Club
  - Author'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)
29. Submitted print entries must not have any Velcro on the back of the print. Inkjet prints can be irreversibly damaged by Velcro.
  30. PDIs must be submitted online, as outlined on the NIPA website
  31. The club ID code will be provided by NIPA before the competition round.
  32. All starred prints will be retained by NIPA to form a portfolio, which will be available on loan to member clubs.
  33. 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.
  34. 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 section of any inter-club competition round.
  35. Submission of an entry confirms acceptance of these rules.
  36. A further event will be held to decide the individual 'Top Images'. This event will consist solely of the starred images selected from the season's rounds.
  37. Unless the author 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**

38. There are three sections
  - Monochrome Prints
  - Colour Prints
  - Projected Digital Images (PDI).
39. 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 at the end of this document.
40. Each entrant may submit up to 8 prints (4 Mono and 4 Colour) and 4 PDIs.
41. 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:
  - Author's Name
  - Name of Club
  - Title of print (Untitled is not acceptable as a title)

42. Projected Digital Images will be submitted online as outlined on the NIPA website. All images submitted online must conform to the PDI definition as in Annex C.
43. Each image must be titled with the following information, in this order:
  - 43.1. "Image title\_name of author\_club.jpg".
44. In all cases images will be projected as submitted online.
45. The competitions will be judged by three judges, nominated by NIPA Competitions Secretary.
46. The judges will decide the 1st, 2nd and 3rd places and may commend any entry, which they deem worthy.
47. Entries are due on the date stipulated on page 2 of the current NIPA handbook.
48. The prints and Projected Images will be displayed at a Novice event. The results will then be delivered by the judges with appropriate comments on their choice and marks.
49. The author of the winning monochrome print will be awarded the NIPA Novice's Shield.
50. The author of the winning colour print will be awarded the NIPA Novices Colour Print Trophy.
51. The author of the winning Projected Digital Image will be awarded the NIPA Novice Projected Image Trophy.
52. Trophies will be held from the date of their presentation until their return is requested by Council.
53. 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.
54. Unless the author 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.
55. Submission of an entry confirms acceptance of the rules and the definition of 'Novice', as outlined in Annex B.

## **Roy Finlay Memorial Natural History Competition Rules**

56. 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.
57. 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 camera 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

58. 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.

59. Images used in Nature Photography competitions may be divided in two classes: Nature and Wildlife.

59.1. Images entered in Nature sections 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.

59.2. Images entered in Wildlife sections 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, photographs of zoo or game farm animals, or of any extant zoological or botanical species taken under controlled conditions are not eligible in Wildlife sections. 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 Nature sections of Exhibitions.

## Image processing Do's and Don'ts

### Techniques allowed

60. Techniques that enhance the presentation of the photograph 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

61. Techniques that remove elements added by the camera, such as dust spots, digital noise and film scratches are also allowed.
62. All adjustments must appear natural. Colour images can be converted to monochrome.
63. Global and selective local adjustments are permitted.

#### Techniques not allowed

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

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

67. 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.
68. 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.
69. 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

70. Entrants must be a member of a NIPA Camera Club.
71. The copyright must belong to the entrant.
72. All entries are on an individual basis (they do not have to be selected by their club).
73. Each member may submit up to ten prints and ten projected digital images (PDIs).
74. Prints must be securely mounted with a maximum dimension of a 30cm x 40cm.
75. PDIs must be in jpg form, sRGB colour space, with a maximum width of 1600 pixels and a maximum height of 1200 pixels.
76. Each print entry collection must be accompanied by a fully completed entry form.
77. Each individual print must be labeled on the back of the mount with; factual title only, author's name and camera club.
78. PDIs must be submitted online, as outlined on the NIPA website.
79. The entry fee is £1 per image. Payment options as outlined on the NIPA website.
80. Submission details and deadlines for all images are as outlined on the NIPA website.
81. 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.
82. Unless the author 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**

83. An entrant must belong to a member club of NIPA.
84. There are sections for Monochrome prints, Colour prints and PDIs. Entrants may submit up to 4 images in each section. The subject is Open. Prints or PDIs must not have been accepted in a previous NIPA Annual Exhibition.
85. 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 author's name and address
  - The name of the author's club
  - The title of the print
86. Projected Digital Images must be submitted online, as outlined on the NIPA website.
87. All images submitted online must conform to the PDI definition as in Annex C.
88. Each image must be titled with the following information, in this order: Image title\_name of author\_club.
89. In all cases images will be projected as submitted online.
90. The right of reproduction will be assumed unless otherwise stated at time of entry.
91. 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.
92. Submission of entries will be taken as acceptance of these conditions.
93. Unless the author 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.
94. The entry fee is £1.00 for each Print or PDI entered.
95. 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 the Celtic Challenge.
96. Prints, except those retained for PAGB selection, will be returned, usually in October.

## **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 author inherently states that the copyright of the Image is his property and is at his sole disposal. If this is not the case NIPA will not accept the Image. Unless the author 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 author 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 author 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 a Place in any NIPA Exhibition.
5. The author also agrees that if his/her print is awarded a star in a NIPA Inter-Club competition, or gains a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Commended or Highly Commended place 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 place 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 author, 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 author 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 author of any print retained as above may always produce a second or copy print for his 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 Interclub 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. With immediate effect, a person will no longer be considered a 'Novice' when they:
  - a. Obtain two 'Starred' images in any NIPA Competition<sup>1</sup>;
    - For the purposes of this definition, a 1st, 2nd or 3rd place in any NIPA Competition is considered to be the equivalent of a 'Starred' image;
  - 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 camera club, review the standard of an entrant's photography.

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<sup>1</sup> Includes Interclub Competitions, Exhibition, Novice Competition and the Roy Finlay Natural History Memorial Competition

## 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

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