Rules and Regulations - World Photographic Cup 2024

Eligibility & Teams

a. Each country may be represented by only one team. Each team must elect a captain who may be or may not be a team member.
Only one captain per team can enter information and upload team images into the system.

b. Prior to submitting their entry, teams must first apply for submission through the WPC Online Entry System.

c. Teams generally are created by a national association made up of professional photographers, legally constituted in their country of origin, provided they are nationally representative, they include a significant number of professional photographers, and they operate democratically with each member having one vote. In special cases, ad hoc created – and not for profit – national photographic committees may also apply for submission. All teams will be made up of professional and artist photographers whose citizenship is within the relevant country. Members of a national team with dual citizenship can represent the country of their choosing, and members of a national team who gain a new citizenship, or wish to compete for a different national team, can do so as long as at least three years have passed since they most recently represented for their previous national team in the WPC competition.

d. Should more than one organization or group from any given country apply to enter a team, it shall be at the sole discretion of the WPC governing committee to determine which of the applying organizations or groups will act as the official team committee for that country. On recognizing submissions from countries, priority shall be granted to the previously submitting organization. In the European area, FEP members associations have submission' priority right. In the Asian area, UAPP member associations have submission priority right. Contributing photographers are not required to be members of contributing associations but their images must be submitted through their team captain.

e. Each team is responsible for determining its own methods and criteria for choosing the individuals and images which will comprise its team submission in each category.

f. Individuals may be selected to represent their team in more than one category. However, no team may enter multiple images from a creator in a single category.

g. Some teams may choose not to participate in all categories. However, in this case the aggregate score of the national team will be limited to the images submitted.

h. The WPC Governing Committee at its discretion may choose to do not accept or to de-certify a team.

i. Once an image is entered, it cannot be entered again IN ANY FORM in the competition, whether in the current year or in any subsequent year. Images from a single photographer should be essentially different from WPC edition to the next.

j. The images must be anonymous and in the case of images pertinent to advertising campaigns, they must not contain any text or graphic elements, which were not part of the original exposure. Images containing text will be immediately disqualified.

k. Submitted images must not be presented as being in the competition until after they are validated. The WPC Governing Committee will communicate the date from which the submitted images may be shown in public as accepted in the WPC Competition.

Participation fees

a. The fee for team participation will be a one-off fee of €400. Teams can pay this amount with credit card directly on the WPC website entry area or by Internet Bank Transfer. The participation fee is the same regardless of the number of images a team chooses to enter. There is no "per image" fee to participate. The team may choose the way they raise the funds to cover the entry fee - including charging each team member, however the World Photographic Cup will only accept one payment per team.

Rights, Licenses & Releases

a. Submitting the team entries, team captains certify that all individual creators, whose images are selected for their team's submission, are professional and artist photographers and present their original work, that they own all rights pertaining to the work or they possess the permission of the copyright holder to submit the work, as well as all necessary model release forms and permits pertaining to the image.

b. Team captains also certify that all individual creators whose images are selected for their team's submission agree to hold the World Photographic Cup harmless against all claims and liabilities arising out of the WPC's consideration, display, or other non-commercial use of the image.

c. Team captains certify as well that by agreeing to participate in their team's World Photographic Cup submission, individual team members agree to license to the World Photographic Cup the right to display the image(s) on the WPC web site, in articles, exhibitions and publications pertaining to the World Photographic Cup competition, included the annual WPC printed exhibition and the annual book of the winners and for future WPC promotional purposes.

d. The WPC partner companies will have the possibility to display the winning images on their media or through their products (prints, collections, exhibitions, books etc.). This opportunity will be limited to non-commercial purposes and subjected to the WPC rules and regulations on rights, licenses, and releases with the authors of the images.

e. The WPC and the partner companies have no rights to display the submitted images beyond those outlined in this paragraph.

Categories

Images that become part of the Best of the Best internationally MUST set the highest standard and demonstrate a strong photographic foundation supported by postproduction enhancement opportunities. Images, to become part of the Top Ten in each category must be of unsurpassed quality in ALL aspects of original capture, retouching and creative enhancement, technical and artistic excellence.

The WPC is a PHOTOGRAPHIC competition, all elements used in images or composited images must be made by the submitting photographer. All images/image elements must be created by the submitting photographer. The use of stock images or image elements created using AI/CGI are not permitted. Image Editing Tools that are based on machine learning to retouch or modify the submitting photographer's image are allowed when using image elements created by the same photographer. No modification or use of third-party images not captured by the submitting photographer is allowed.

During the initial Validation, before judging begins, the WPC Validation Committee will screen images for relevance to Categories and rules to confirm eligibility.

The WPC Validation committee may at any time (before, during and after the competition) request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original Camera EXIF data) and an explanation of the circumstances under which the image(s) where made to confirm eligibility. After the Top 10 announcement, all Top 10 and Best of Nation images will be required to submit original images (included camera capture EXIF data) to confirm eligibility.

Images created under the direction of an instructor, photography coach or at a photographic workshop are not allowed.

Each team may submit up to three images in each of eight categories, including:

Commercial
Images with an intended use by a commercial client to promote or brand a product or company. Advertising, fashion, beauty, still life, food, events, architecture, corporate and industrial photography are all included in this category.

Composite and Non-composite images and highly manipulated images (Photoshop or similar) are allowed. AI or CGI elements are not permitted.

The WPC Validation committee will request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original EXIF data) after the Top Ten announcement to confirm eligibility.

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Illustration/Digital Art

An illustration/Digital Art entry is a graphic depiction of any concept or subject. The main principle of an illustration is to convey a concept, story, or activity in such a way as to provide a visual representation.

Composite and non-composite images and highly manipulated images (Photoshop or similar) are allowed in this category. AI or CGI elements are not permitted.

The WPC Validation committee will request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original EXIF data) after the Top Ten announcement to confirm eligibility.

Nature Landscape

This category is for photography that is devoted to displaying natural elements such as landscapes, cityscapes, plants, flowers, trees and close ups of natural scenes and textures. Aerial, macro and astrophotography are included in this category.

Minor adjustments to crop, rotate, selective dodge and burn, reduce noise, sharpen, adjust colour/black-and-white, and minor cleaning jobs to remove sensor dust or chromatic aberration are permitted.

Composite images are allowed through photo stitching, focus stacking and multiple exposure shot at the same time and in the same place.

It is NOT permitted to add, delete, or move elements by cloning, healing, patching, content aware fill, liquify or similar tools.
The WPC Validation committee will request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original EXIF data) after the Top Ten announcement to confirm eligibility.

Nature Wildlife

Images must illustrate the astonishing diversity of wildlife from all parts of the world in a natural habitat. Images made in a controlled environment (e.g. a zoo) or using "baiting techniques" are not allowed.

Minor adjustments to crop, rotate, selective dodge and burn, reduce noise, sharpen, adjust colour/black-and-white, and minor cleaning jobs to remove sensor dust or chromatic aberration are permitted.

Composite and highly manipulated images are not allowed. It is NOT allowed to add, delete or move elements by cloning, healing, patching, content aware fill, liquify or similar tools. Images created by "baiting" the animal are not allowed.

The WPC Validation committee will request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original EXIF data) after the Top Ten announcement to confirm eligibility.

Illustrative Portrait

Images where styling, creative photo techniques, extensive makeup or props are allowed and highly technical postproduction techniques are encouraged and may be an essential part of the final story in the photograph. Entries in this category can include composite images and images that have been highly manipulated or stylized. All contributing elements must be made by the submitting photographer. Stock images are not permitted as elements within the final image. AI or CGI elements are not permitted.

The WPC Validation committee will request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original EXIF data) after the Top Ten announcement to confirm eligibility.

Natural Portrait

Images where lighting, posing, and highlighting of the person's (including domestic animals) NATURAL appearance, essence, personality and character is the goal in this category. Images must tell a story about the personality of the subject(s) including their culture and/or traditions if applicable.

Images that use distinct makeup, enhancement, excessive skin retouching or props to transform the natural appearance must be entered in Illustrative portrait or Illustration/Digital art categories. Images with distinct makeup or props that support a natural cultural statement are allowed. Fashion/beauty images must be entered in the Commercial category. AI or CGI elements are not permitted.

Postproduction techniques are not to be an essential part of the final story in the photograph.

The WPC Validation committee will request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original EXIF data) after the Top Ten announcement to confirm eligibility.

Reportage/Photojournalism

Images that illustrate an actual public or non-public event (excluding sports). Images that display life, human interest, news telling or record of events. Successful images will likely have high impact and lasting emotional response.

Adjustments to crop, rotate, selective dodge and burn, reduce noise, sharpen, adjust colour/black-and-white, and minor cleaning jobs to remove sensor dust or chromatic aberration are permitted.

It is NOT allowed to combine several photos into one image (panorama, multi-exposure, etc), or add, delete or move elements by, for instance, cloning, healing, patching, content aware fill, liquify or similar tools.

The WPC Validation committee will request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original EXIF data) after the Top Ten announcement to confirm eligibility.

Sports
Images must be from a sports activity that illustrates an actual sporting event (public or non-public). Staged images are not allowed. This category is for all sports related photography featuring any competitive or recreational sport.

Adjustments to crop, rotate, selective dodge and burn, reduce noise, sharpen, adjust colour/black-and-white, and minor cleaning jobs to remove sensor dust or chromatic aberration are permitted.

It is NOT allowed to combine several photos into one image (panorama, multi-exposure, etc.), or add, delete or move elements by, for instance, cloning, healing, patching, content aware fill, liquify or similar tools.

The WPC Validation committee will request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original EXIF data) after the Top Ten announcement to confirm eligibility.

Wedding Open
Wedding Open entries must be photographed in connection with an actual wedding event. Images must include some visual reference(s) that define the wedding event.

Composite images are allowed so long as each element used was shot at the same wedding. All elements used must be created by the submitting photographer.

Commercial, Illustrative and Fashion images are not permitted in the wedding category and must be entered into Commercial or Illustration/Digital categories.

In instances where an image is questioned about being from a real wedding event, the Team Captain will be asked to provide additional supporting images confirming the image was taken from a real wedding event (e.g. bride and groom, groups, ceremony etc).

The WPC Validation committee will request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original EXIF data) after the Top Ten announcement to confirm eligibility.

Wedding Documentary
Images must be captured at an actual wedding documenting the event without posing, prompting, or intervention of any kind from the photographer.

Adjustments to crop, rotate, selective dodge and burn, reduce noise, sharpen, adjust colour/black-and-white, and minor cleaning jobs to remove sensor dust or chromatic aberration are permitted.

Only single capture images will be accepted. Composite and multiple exposure images will not be accepted.

It is not permitted to add, delete or move elements by, for instance, cloning, healing, patching, content aware fill, liquify or similar tools.

The WPC Validation committee will request original files (Raw or JPG that includes original EXIF data) after the Top Ten announcement to confirm eligibility.

Technical Requirements

a. Submissions will be entered via the WPC Online Entry System by each team's designated captain using the supplied login information.

b. Colour and black & white pictures may be submitted. Image parameters must be:

- A minimum of 4,000 pixels on the longest side

- Format: maximum-quality JPEG, to be under 16 megabytes

- Embedded profile: sRGB, Adobe 98 or Greyscale

Awards
Individual awards

Individual awards are awarded based on the computed results of the judging software

- Digital Certificates of participation will be awarded to all individual team members and available to download from the online judging system.

- A Team Certificate of Participation for each team member will be awarded indicating each of the individual team members names and will be available to download from the online judging system. (Available for digital download upon finishing the Validation of images in November)

- Best of Nation Award certificates will be awarded to the photographer of the highest scoring image for each team entered. (Available for digital download by publication in January)

- Finalist certificates will be presented to the photographers of the Top 10 scored images in each and all categories. (Available for digital download by publication in January)

- Gold, Silver and Bronze medals will be awarded to the first, second and third highest score images in each category. Gold, Silver and Bronze Certificates will be presented to the top three images in each category. (Available for digital download by Award Ceremony in Spring)

- Certificates will be awarded to the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th highest scored images in each category. (Available for digital download by Award Ceremony in Spring)

- Printed certificates will be presented to attendees at the Physical WPC Awards Presentation, otherwise all certificates will be available to download and print via the online judging software.

- If a medallist or their representative is not present in person at the awards presentation, their medal will be posted to their nominated address COD - the cost of postage will be passed onto the recipient.

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Team awards

- The World Photographic Cup will be awarded to the national team that receives the highest aggregate score of all their teams' images in all categories.

- Trophies and certificates will be awarded to the second and third place teams based on the aggregated score of all their teams' submissions.

- Team Certificates will be awarded to the 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th and 10th place teams based on the aggregated score of all their teams' images in all categories.

- Printed certificates of above Team Awards will be presented to attendees at the Physical WPC Awards Presentation, otherwise all the Team certificates will be available to download and print via the online judging software.

- The Digital Certificate of Participation for each team will be awarded indicating each of the individual team members names and will be available to download from the online judging system by Award Ceremony in Spring.

- If a Team Captain or their representative is not present in person at the awards presentation, their trophy will be posted to their nominated address COD - the cost of postage will be passed onto the Team Captain/Team.

Computing Team Scores

For purposes of computing team scores, points are given to each country's submission. Every image submitted receives ONE point towards their team total. Images placed in the top ten of a category receive additional points for their team (1st place = 10 points, 2nd place = 9 points, 3rd place = 8 points, 4th place = 7points, 5th place = 6 points, 6th place = 5 points, 7th place = 4 points, 8th place = 3 points, 9th place = 2 points, 10th place = 1 point.)

Judging Process and Criteria

Images are judged by a panel of international judges from around the world. Each accepted national team has the right to select and nominate 1 judge, so the number of the judges will be depending by the number of the national entered teams. Judges must be selected based on their photographic technique, experience, and previous training as a photographic judge. An association may elect not nominate a judge. Judges images may not be part of countries submission. Team captains may not be selected as judges. Judging will be blind and every image will be judged by each judge. However each judge will not score images from their own country. Selected judges must have an extensive national and international judging experience and are requested to participate in "online" briefings for this judging. Judges not participating in the scheduled briefings may be subjected to exclusion from the jury.

Overview of the principles of judging for WPC:

Scoring will be based on two criteria, each of the 2 criteria will contribute a maximum of 50% of the total score:

Each image is assessed two times and two scores entered. It is critical that judges look at each image for its strength based on the category (images that don't clearly relate to the category description should score lower). Judges must be open minded about creative expression and not fall victim to digital enhancement that does not support the image concept when scoring, especially in portrait and wedding categories.

While digital enhancement is part of photography today and relevant, all submissions should demonstrate foundation photographic skills. Images with extensive postproduction (electronic/digital manipulation) are accepted so long as the photographic component is dominant. Judges are asked to recognize photography as the core contribution to all image categories. Postproduction should be relevant for the image. Images with a simple yet powerful message may not rely on Creativity or Technical manipulation to be recognized as a top scoring image. Any postproduction must be done under the direction of the photographer (author) of the image.

Impact and Visual Language

Does an image have an impact? Does it create in you a sense of emotion when you see it for the first time? How does the image effect you (laughter, sadness, anger or other strong emotions)? Is the image powerful, vibrant, creative, original? Is the visual language used compelling? Is the Photographic art used well to convey an idea, a message, a thought, or an impression, and recognizes the photographic relevance or contribution? Does the selected visual language (style, light, technique and enhancement) support the intent of the image and expresses relevantly the definition of the category of submission?

Technical excellence / composition

Is the image professionally impeccable and technically strong? Is the lighting and posing (where applicable) done with excellence? Is the product (car, building etc.) showcased with excellence? Is the postproduction management done with excellence (color balance, sharpness, retouching and compositing where applicable)? Is the composition strong – and possibly innovative? Does the composition support the story of the image, holds the viewers' attention to the image and emphasizes the message of the image?

Judges and members of the WPC Governing Committee, the WPC Staff or the WPC Judging Sub-Committee are not eligible to participate as individual team members or as Team Captains.

The jury's judgment is final and binding.

Images Validation

A validation sub-committee of the World Photographic Cup governing committee, made up of 5 members, will check the eligibility of all submitted images at any time before, during and/or after the competition.

Submitted images must not be presented as being in the competition until after the initial "validation period" before judging begins.
The validation sub-committee has the authority to disqualify images that it deems do not satisfy description in the category, conflict with the spirit of the category description or in any other way conflicts with the rules. A qualified majority (4 of 5 or 75%) must be in agreement.

In the event of a disqualification before judging starts, every effort will be made for the Team to replace the disqualified image. The CEO of WPC will notify the related Team Captain and he/she will have 5 days to replace or modify the entry. Images disqualified after the judging starts can not be replaced.

Captains wishing to appeal the decision of disqualification may submit an appeal stating their reasons. A group of four WPC present or past Governing Committee members (not on the Validation Sub-Committee) will review the appeal within the next 24 hours. It will take 3 of 4 appeal members to overturn the decision of the Validation Sub-Committee.

After the competition is over, an entry may be disqualified if it is proven that the image did not follow the category descriptions and rules. Disqualifications at this stage must be sanctioned by the WPCs Governing Committee before informing the Team Captain/photographer. The appeal process is available and must be concluded before the decision is made public.

Images that prove to be made with elements created using AI/CGI will be disqualified from the competition and the author disqualified from participating in the WPC for two years.

Governing Committee & Support Structure

The World Photographic Cup Governing Committee will have final authority on all matters involving the WPC, administration, structure, teams, images, and judging.