Online Video, Presentation and Innovation: Categories and Descriptions

NPPA 2021 Best of Photojournalism

The Best of Photojournalism – Online Video, Presentation and Innovation division recognizes individuals and teams that excel in promoting online visual journalism through web sites, galleries, multimedia presentations and other digital delivery means. While judges will pay attention to innovative usage of technologies, the journalism demonstrated and potential for impact will be the primary determinant.

Categories are structured to allow for individual and team entries.

Categories in the Online Video Storytelling section are for self-contained, "click-to-play" video stories. These entries will be judged on the video alone and no other story components.

Categories in the Online Visual Presentation section are for whole story packages only. Emphasizing the use of visuals, each story URL will be judged on the whole user experience, including text, design, interactivity and engagement. Individual elements should be entered in Online Video Storytelling or Online Picture Editing categories.

The distinctions between the Online Video, Presentation and Innovation division and the Video division are intentionally left open to the entrant's preference, particularly if videos were published on multiple platforms. Video stories originally produced for television audiences, especially if they feature voice-overs or reporter "stand-ups," have typically been entered in the Video division. Video stories originally produced for news websites, online publications or multi-platform distribution have typically been entered in the Online Video, Presentation and Innovation division.

Video stories may only be entered in one division or the other, not both. However, video stories may be entered in a standalone video category and as part of an entire story package in a visual presentation category of the Online Video, Presentation and Innovation division, as they will be judged based on different criteria.

Stories should honor the viewer's trust, and under no circumstances should scenes depicted as candid be set up, directed or controlled in any way. Any re-creations of scenes to illustrate events in the past must be clearly marked as such. Special effects and music should be used sparingly and not alter the truthfulness of the narrative.

Filmmakers cannot be paid by anyone with a commercial stake in the story, and no branded content will be accepted.

Online Video Storytelling

These categories are for self-contained, "click-to-play" video stories. This entry will be judged on the video alone and no other story components.

If you have questions about whether your video entry belongs in Online Visual or Broadcast TV Storytelling divisions, refer to the division guidelines.

The following categories are divided into team size:

Individual: One person is credited for the reporting, documenting, editing, production, color, graphics or any other aspect of video production.

Permissible help includes:

- Feedback on story structure from an editor, or colleague
- Minimal timeline adjustments such as superficial technical edits
- Minimal field assistance like operating a second interview camera

If more than one person is listed in the credits, the entrant must state explicitly in the entry notes exactly where and how they were assisted so judges can determine if eligibility.

Small Team: Two to four people are credited in the reporting, filming, production, editing, mixing, coloring, graphics or any other aspect of video production.

Large Team: Five or more people were involved in the reporting, filming, production, editing, mixing, coloring, graphics or any other aspect of video production.

If any team-size sub-category has less than six entries, it will be merged with the sub-category of the closest team size within the category. For example, if Environment–Individual has 4 entries, Environment–Small Team has 3 entries, and Environment–Large Team has 9 entries, Individual and Small Team become one 7-entry category. In the case where all team-sizes within a category fail to reach 6 entries, all sub-categories will be combined into a single category for all team sizes, e.g. Environment.

News and Issue: Serious stories about national and/or local issues, policies and health belong in this category. If it is a longer-term story with a run time exceeding 15 minutes, it belongs in the Documentary category. Entrants with stories about politics should consider the *2020 Election* category. Entrants with stories about social justice issues should consider the *Race and Identity in America* category.

2020 Election: Stories about local and national politics as they relate to the 2020 election. News, features, explanatory reporting and investigations are all eligible. Stories with run times exceeding 15 minutes belong in the *Documentary* category.

Environment: Stories about the natural world reported with scientific rigor. Field reporting, features, explainers, nature docushorts and stories about climate change belong here, whether

they report on a specific local facet or phenomenon of this global crisis, or if they address a national or global policy or initiative. Stories with run times exceeding 15 minutes belong in the *Documentary* category.

Race and Identity in America: Any story — political, scientific, sports, feature, investigative, explanatory, profile — that examines, celebrates, or sheds light on race and identity in American life. "Identity" is a broad description that includes, but is not limited to: race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, immigration status, and age. Most breaking news stories related to these topics, such as single-event protest coverage, would better fit in *News and Issue* or *24-Hour*. Stories with run times exceeding 15 minutes belong in the *Documentary* category.

Pandemic: Any story — political, scientific, sports, feature, investigative, explanatory, profile — on the topic of the Coronavirus Pandemic. Stories with run times exceeding 15 minutes belong in the *Documentary* category.

Culture: Feature and slice of life stories belong in this category. Culture and arts coverage, profiles, and lighter reporting belongs here. Stories with a serious tone belong in *News and Issue*. Stories in the sports world, including documentary-style features exploring issues, teams, trends, events or individual athletes belong here. Stories with run times exceeding 15 minutes belong in the *Documentary* category.

24 Hour: This can be any topic – but it must have been filmed, edited and published in 24 hours.

Documentary: Longer-term stories of any topic that take a deep dive into a story or issue with a run time longer than 15 minutes.

Portfolio: Four (no more, no less) video stories of any category by the same individual or same team judged as a whole. News organizations are limited to one small team portfolio and one large team portfolio. There is no limit on the number of individuals that may enter from the same news organization. Every individual is limited to one portfolio entry.

Determine your team size by the number of people who worked on the total entry. For example, while a team entry composed of 4 videos with an identical 3 person team on each video would be eligible in the Small team category; a team entry with two videos by one set of two team members, one video by a different set of two team members, and one video by yet another team of two, would have six total team members and only be eligible in the Large team category.

The following four categories are not divided by team size:

Docuseries: A multi-part video series exploring a topic or theme. Must have a minimum of three installments, series currently in progress are eligible but not recommended as entries. These will be judged on click-to-play videos only – if you would like to enter a story package that includes design and multimedia elements, see the Online Visual Presentation categories.

Video Editing: Three standalone video stories by the same video editor to be judged on the story

development and editing.

Online Visual Presentation

These categories are for whole story packages only. Emphasizing the use of visuals, each story URL will be judged on the whole user experience, including text, design, interactivity and engagement. Individual elements should be entered in Online Video Storytelling or Online Picture Editing categories.

These categories are divided by team size. Team members include but are not limited to photographers, video editors and producers, developers and web staff, reporters, editors, graphics, illustrators and designers.

- Small Team: Up to four people have bylines on the finished, published project.
- Large Team: Five or more people have bylines on the finished, published project.

News and Issue: Serious stories about national and/or local issues, policies and health belong in this category. Please ensure your entry is not better suited to the *2020 Election*, *Environment*, *Race and Identity in America* or *Pandemic* categories.

2020 Election: Projects about local and national politics as they relate to the 2020 election. News, features, explanatory reporting and investigations are all eligible.

Environment: Projects about the natural world reported with scientific rigor. Field reporting, features, explainers, and stories about climate change belong here, whether they report on a specific local facet or phenomenon of this global crisis, or if they address a national or global policy or initiative.

Race and Identity in America: Any project — political, scientific, sports, feature, investigative, explanatory, profile — that examines, celebrates, or sheds light on race and identity in American life. "Identity" is a broad description that includes, but is not limited to: race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexuality, immigration status, and age.

Pandemic: Any project — political, scientific, sports, feature, investigative, explanatory, profile — on the topic of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Culture: Feature and slice of life projects belong in this category. Culture and arts coverage, profiles, and lighter reporting belongs here. Stories with a serious tone belong in News and Issue. Stories in the sports world, including documentary-style features exploring issues, teams, trends, events or individual athletes belong here. If it is a longer-term story with a run time exceeding 15 minutes, it belongs in the *Documentary* category.

The following two categories are not divided by team size:

Portfolio: Four (no more, no less) story packages of any category by the same team or publication, judged as a whole. News organizations are limited to one Visual Presentation portfolio entry.

Innovation: This is for moonshot projects: visual stories innovating in every sense of the word, pushing journalism forward. Virtual reality, augmented reality, 360 video or other immersive story forms are eligible. Novel uses of technology like drones and remote operated cameras are eligible — and so are masterful combinations of established storyforms and technologies. Stories that take an innovative approach to the act of reporting — through crowdsourcing or other means — are eligible. Stories that are published natively off-platform, through an open platform, or natively to social media are also eligible. Submit links, descriptions and relevant audience engagement information if applicable.

Questions about eligibility and where your piece should be entered can be directed to bop@nppa.org.