

Student Publication/Broadcast Division

General Excellence: Entry consists of one publication issued in November 2025.

General News Story: Will be judged on clarity, enterprise, and significance. One story per entry.

Page Design: Selection of three. Emphasis on presentation, attractiveness, and effectiveness.

Column Writing: Three columns by one writer. Emphasis on the writer's ability to entertain, move, or educate the reader with skillful writing that has personality. It should be distinct from news writing.

Watchdog: A report that holds public officials and entities accountable, uncovering new information that could significantly change the conventional wisdom about anything or anyone of public interest. A single story reflects in-depth reporting efforts and creativity beyond the scope of general news coverage.

Data-driven journalism: A report that analyzes data information for the benefit of public interest. Emphasis on originality and in-depth research. Entry may include a brief letter outlining the research, presentation, and impact of the report.

Serious Feature: A serious profile or news feature. Emphasis on strong writing, education of the reader about something important, and the writer's ability to put a local situation into perspective.

Light Feature: Human interest or humorous feature story. Emphasis on lively writing, reader interest in the subject, and originality of approach.

Election Report: A report specific to the 2025 primary or general election.

Editorial: Submit one editorial per entry. Emphasis will be on lively writing and strong reasoning that moves the reader.

Sports News Report: Can be a sports or sports feature story.

Photography: Submit three examples.

Graphics: Submit three examples.

Student TV or Radio – General News Report: A story, planned or unplanned. It can be an issue or event oriented.

Student TV or Radio – Public Affairs Program – Studio or field: May focus on an issue, subject, situation, or problem. Emphasis on creativity, energy, focus, and balance.

Publication – Daily

Daily Publications are defined as any publication, online or print, that consistently publishes stories four or more days a week throughout the year.

General Excellence-Printed: Entry consists of three issues from 2025. Issue submitted should include one Sunday issue. **GE entries may only be submitted to one GE category type, Printed or Online Media Only.*

General Excellence-Online Media Only: Entry consists of three links from 2025. **GE entries may only be submitted to one GE category type, Printed or Online Media Only.*

Special Purpose Publication - Printed: Special section/publication on a single topic produced by the news staff. Must be distributed with the newspaper and may also be available to view online.

Special Purpose Publication – Online Media Only: Special section/publication on a single topic produced by the news staff. Published online only.

General News Story: Non-deadline news story. Will be judged on clarity, enterprise, and significance.

Spot News Coverage: A breaking news story; first-time coverage. Will be judged on clarity, enterprise, significance, and immediacy.

Watchdog: A report that holds public officials and entities accountable, uncovering new information that could significantly change the conventional wisdom about anything or anyone of public interest. A single story reflects in-depth reporting efforts and creativity beyond the scope of general news coverage.

Data-driven journalism: A report that analyzes data information for the benefit of public interest. Emphasis on originality and in-depth research. Entry may include a brief letter outlining the research, presentation, and impact of the report.

Serious Feature Report: A serious profile or news feature. Emphasis on strong writing, education of the reader about something important, and the writer's ability to put a local situation into perspective. May include side bars.

Light Feature Report: Human interest or humorous feature story. Emphasis on lively writing, reader interest in the subject, and originality of approach. May include side bars.

Series: A series of well-written, well-researched, well-coordinated pieces on one single topic worthy of a series, appearing on more than one day. May include same-day side bars.

Outdoor Feature: Column, profile, or news feature on an outdoor topic. Emphasis on strong writing, education of the reader about the topic, and the ability to put a local or regional situation into perspective. May include sidebars.

Sports News Coverage: A sports story on an event, breaking news, or issue.

Sports Feature Story: A sports human interest or humorous story.

Sports Prep News Coverage: A high school sports story on an event, breaking news, or issue.

Sports Prep Feature Story: A high school sports human interest or humorous story.

General Column: Three columns by a writer not assigned to a specific topic (see specialty column). Emphasis on the writer's ability to entertain, move, or educate the reader with skillful writing that has personality. It should be distinct from news writing.

Specialty Column: Three columns on a single topic (i.e., arts, sports, food, outdoors, politics). May include reviews. Emphasis on the writer's expertise and ability to entertain and educate the reader.

Editorial: Submit one staff-written editorial per entry. Emphasis will be on lively writing and strong reasoning that moves the reader.

Opinion: Opinion writing or op-ed piece by non-staff writer; submit one. It can include guest opinions.

Arts / Entertainment Report: A report on arts or entertainment.

Political Report: A report on politics or government.

Election Report: A report specific to the 2025 primary or general election.

Education Report: A report on education.

Business Report: A report on business.

Agriculture Report: A report on agriculture.

Crime Report: A report covering criminal activity in the community.

Court Report: A report covering a civil or criminal trial.

Religion Report: A report on religion or related topics.

Environmental Report: A report on environmental issues.

Health/Medical Report: A report on health or medicine.

Rookie of the Year: Given to one person in daily publications. The individual must be in his/her first full-time professional job and have been working for no more than a year at the end of December 2025. Please include a letter of endorsement from the entrant's editor and the entrant's resume. Submit three best stories.

Publication – Weekly

Weekly Publications are defined as any publication, online or print, that consistently publishes stories weekly throughout the year. If a publication updates its website throughout the week but publishes a print edition weekly or twice weekly, it should enter the Weekly Publication division.

General Excellence-Printed: Entry consists of three issues from 2025. Issue submitted should include one Sunday issue. **GE entries may only be submitted to one GE category type, Printed or Online Media Only.*

General Excellence-Online Media Only: Entry consists of three links from 2025. **GE entries may only be submitted to one GE category type, Printed or Online Media Only.*

Special Purpose Publication - Printed: Special section/publication on a single topic produced by the news staff. Must be distributed with the newspaper and may also be available to view online.

Special Purpose Publication – Online Media-Only: Special section/publication on a single topic produced by the news staff. Published online only.

General News Story: Non-deadline news story. Will be judged on clarity, enterprise, and significance.

Spot News Coverage: A breaking news story; first-time coverage. Will be judged on clarity, enterprise, significance, and immediacy. Since a weekly may have more time to develop a spot story, thorough coverage of the subject and its ramifications will be considered.

Watchdog: A report that holds public officials and entities accountable, uncovering new information that could significantly change the conventional wisdom about anything or anyone of public interest. A single story reflects in-depth reporting efforts and creativity beyond the scope of general news coverage.

Data-driven journalism: A report that analyzes data information for the benefit of public interest. Emphasis on originality and in-depth research. Entry may include a brief letter outlining the research, presentation, and impact of the report.

Serious Feature Report: A serious profile or news feature. Emphasis on strong writing, education of the reader about something important, and the writer's ability to put a local situation into perspective. May include side bars.

Light Feature Report: Human interest or humorous feature story. Emphasis on lively writing, reader interest in the subject, and originality of approach. May include side bars.

Series: A series of well-written, well-researched, well-coordinated pieces on one single topic worthy of a series, appearing on more than one day. May include same-day side bars.

Outdoor Feature: Column, profile, or news feature on an outdoor topic. Emphasis on strong writing, education of the reader about the topic, and the ability to put a local or regional situation into perspective. May include sidebars.

Sports Story: A sports story on an event, breaking news, or issue, or a sports human interest or humorous story.

Sports Prep Story: A high school sports story on an event, breaking news, issue, or human-interest or humorous piece.

Column: Three columns by a single writer. Emphasis on the writer's ability to entertain, move, or educate the reader with skillful writing that has personality, distinct from news writing. May be on a single topic (i.e., arts, sports, food, outdoors, politics) or general topics. May include reviews.

Editorial: Submit one staff-written editorial per entry. Emphasis will be on lively writing and strong reasoning that moves the reader.

Opinion: Opinion writing or op-ed piece by non-staff writer; submit one. It can include guest opinions.

Arts / Entertainment Report: A report on arts or entertainment.

Political Report: A report on politics or government.

Election Report: A report specific to the 2025 primary or general election.

Education Report: A report on education.

Business Report: A report on business.

Agriculture Report: A report on agriculture.

Crime Report: A report covering criminal activity in the community.

Court Report: A report covering a civil or criminal trial.

Religion Report: A report on religion or related topics.

Environmental Report: A report on environmental issues.

Health/Medical Report: A report on health or medicine.

Rookie of the Year: Given to one person in weekly publications. The individual must be in his/her first full-time professional job and have been working for no more than a year at the end of December 2025. Please include a letter of endorsement from the entrant's editor and the entrant's resume. Submit three best stories.

Periodical Division

General Excellence: Must be produced and distributed in Idaho and have as few as two or as many as twelve issues per year. Entry is one issue published in 2025.

Periodical Writing, Serious Feature: Submit one article.

Periodical Writing, Light Feature: Submit one article.

Periodical Cover: Excellence in design. Submit one.

Photo Division

Spot News Photography: Emphasis on breaking news, a combination of action and emotion.

Feature Photography, light: A feature photograph, light topic.

Feature Photography, serious: A feature photograph, serious topic.

General News Photography: A general news photograph.

Sports Photography: A sports photograph.

Photo Essay/Package: At least three photos that, together, illustrate an issue, concept, or point of view, or are on the same topic.

Portrait: At least one portrait of a subject or subjects.

Food Photography: At least one photograph of food.

Television Division

DIVISION SIZES: Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes.

General Excellence: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. An entry consists of a 15-minute compilation of the station's best work during the calendar year 2025.

Best Morning News Program: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. An entry consists of one program broadcast during 2025 submitted by the entrant.

Best Evening News Program: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. An entry consists of one program broadcast during 2025, submitted by the entrant.

General News Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. A story planned or unplanned. It can be issue or event oriented.

Spot News Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. Coverage of a single, unplanned breaking event aired the same day or on the next available newscast. Judges will focus on spontaneous and comprehensive coverage of the event.

Best Live Shot: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. Coverage aired within a daily newscast or special news segment. Judges will focus on spontaneous “on the scene” coverage and the value of the live report.

Serious Feature Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. A single-story aired within a program. Emphasis on information and presentation. Preparation may take place over several days.

Light Feature Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. Human interest or humorous story aired within a program. Preparation may take place over several days.

Sports News Story: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. A sports news report within a newscast. May be a spot or feature story.

Public Affairs Program – Studio: Public affairs program based from a studio with in-studio guests. May focus on an issue, subject, situation, or problem. Emphasis on creativity, energy, focus, and balance.

Public Affairs Program – Field: Public affairs program reported and/or produced from the field. May focus on an issue, subject, situation, or problem. Emphasis on creativity, energy, focus, and balance.

Weathercast: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. Excellence in weather reporting aired within a daily newscast. It should be a regularly scheduled weather segment, not to exceed six minutes. Submit a single weathercast from one date.

Outdoor / Environment Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. Story on an outdoor topic or environmental issue. Emphasis on information and presentation about the topic and the ability to put a local or regional situation into perspective.

Health / Medical Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. A locally produced report that examines current medical or health issues.

Crime Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. A report covering criminal activity in the community.

Court Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. A report covering a civil or criminal trial.

Government / Political Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. A locally produced report examining and/or highlighting local, regional, or state government or politics.

Election Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. A locally produced report specific to the 2025 primary or general election.

Education Report: Judged in two market size divisions – Division A – Boise market, Division B – All other market sizes. A report on education and education issues.

Watchdog: A report that holds public officials and entities accountable, uncovering new information that could significantly change the conventional wisdom about anything or anyone of public interest. A single story reflects in-depth reporting efforts and creativity beyond the scope of general news coverage.

Data-driven journalism: A report that analyzes data information for the benefit of public interest. Emphasis on originality and in-depth research. Entry may include a brief letter outlining the research, presentation, and impact of the report.

Series: Two or more well-coordinated stories on a single topic worthy of a series.

Public Affairs Program – Studio: Public affairs program based from a studio with in-studio guests. May focus on an issue, subject, situation, or problem. Emphasis on creativity, energy, focus, and balance.

Public Affairs Program – Field: Public affairs program reported and/or produced from the field. May focus on an issue, subject, situation, or problem. Emphasis on creativity, energy, focus, and balance.

Documentary: A non-regularly scheduled program; not a newscast. May document an individual subject, issue, situation, or problem. This may be a joint news crew effort or that of an individual reporter.

Sports Program: A sports program produced for broadcast outside of a newscast, i.e., full-length pre-game shows, special topic shows, prep sports night shows. At least 60% must be new content or content newly re-edited. Shows made up of segments previously broadcast within a newscast are not eligible.

Arts and Entertainment Report: A report on arts or entertainment. Submit a single story aired on one date.

Consumer Report: A locally produced report that helps consumers understand potential concerns or benefits associated with certain products or services.

Television Writing, Single story: Emphasis on ability to write to video, clarity, and overall report presentation.

Television Writing, Program length: Emphasis on ability to write to video, clarity, and overall report presentation.

Videography, Segment: Excellence in visual storytelling of a single story aired within a daily or special newscast or program. The entry will be judged on video, sound, and editing. It cannot exceed 15 minutes in length.

Videography, Program length: Excellence in visual storytelling. The entry will be judged on video, sound, and editing.

Video Essay: Entry judged on overall presentation, which can include the use of music, natural sound, and editing. It can be a single story or part of a longer form program. It may not be an entire program.

Rookie of the Year: Given to one person in television media, whether on- or off-camera. The individual must be in his/her first full-time professional job and have been working in television for no more than a year at the end of December 2025. Please submit a letter of endorsement from the entrant's editor or station manager and the individual's resume. Submit three best stories.

Audio Division – Radio, Podcast, or other audio

General Excellence: Entry consists of a compilation or clip of up to 15 minutes, from a radio broadcast, podcast, or other regular audio news or feature presentation. This award is intended to showcase the best work over the course of the year from a continuing program.

General News Report: Reporting of a news story, planned or unplanned. May be a series or comprehensive coverage.

Election Report: A locally produced report specific to the 2025 primary or general election.

Spot News Report: Coverage of a single breaking, spontaneous event aired the same day or on the next available newscast. May include live coverage.

Watchdog: A report that holds public officials and entities accountable, uncovering new information that could significantly change the conventional wisdom about anything or anyone of public interest. A single story reflects in-depth reporting efforts and creativity beyond the scope of general news coverage.

Data-driven journalism: A report that analyzes data information for the benefit of public interest. Emphasis on originality and in-depth research. Entry may include a brief letter outlining the research, presentation, and impact of the report.

Serious Feature Report: Single piece or series. Emphasis on information and presentation. It can be human interest or issue-oriented. Preparation may take place over several days.

Light Feature Report: Single piece or series. Human interest or humorous story. Preparation may take place over several days.

Interview: An audio interview. Will be judged on presentation, interest, and overall quality.

News Talk Show: Submit one episode. The program must be Idaho produced and will be judged on presentation, interest, audience interaction, and overall quality. May be a call-in program or a general news program with call-in elements.

Sports Talk Show: Submit one episode. The program must be Idaho produced and will be judged on presentation, interest, audience interaction, and overall quality.

Use of Sound: Most creative use of sound in the reporting of a story aired within a daily newscast or special report.

Public Relations Division

Opinion Writing: A piece of opinion writing or op-ed piece.

News Release: Selection of three news releases and if available, up to five clippings from each of them.

Feature Writing: Original material written for a particular communication project. Submit text of feature article as well as documentation of publication and placement. The feature article should have been written by the practitioner and submitted and published through his/her efforts.

Annual Report: Publications that report on an organization's annual performance.

Newsletter: May be intended for an internal or external audience. Submit one issue.

Special Purpose Publication: A single-issue publication designed for a special purpose.

Media Campaign: A series of communications related to a single project, product launch, or event. Include a copy of campaign materials and a brief description of the campaign. May include online print, audio, or broadcast materials.

Public Service Campaign: May include audio, television, Web, and/or print PSA's or other community outreach to advance public understanding of a charitable or public organization or event.

All Media Awards (Publications, TV, Audio, Photo, Periodicals, etc.)

First Amendment Award: This award will be given for work by Idaho journalists, in any medium, that advances the cause of freedom of information in Idaho in the public interest. Submit a copy of an article, broadcast, or publication, along with a letter explaining the project or article and its impact.

Best Website: This award will focus on the quality of a site as a whole. Emphasis will be on news content, overall presentation, and service to users. May focus on a single topic or cover a broad spectrum of topics. You must include the URL (web address) of the site on the entry form.

Reporter of the Year Award – Print & Broadcast: An honor bestowed on two Idaho journalists, one in print and one in broadcast media, for outstanding reporting. Individuals must submit three of their most enterprising stories. Entry must also include a letter of support from their news director or editor describing why this individual deserves the award.

Photographer of the Year Award – Print & Broadcast: An honor bestowed on a single Idaho photojournalist and a single Idaho videographer for outstanding visual reporting. Individuals must be full-time working photographers or videographers. For photographers, submit up to ten images with captions. For videographers, submit a composite of up to 15 minutes in length. Entry must also include a letter of support from an editor or manager describing why this individual deserves the award.

Sports Reporter of the Year Award – Print & Broadcast: An honor bestowed on two Idaho sports journalists, one in print and one in broadcast media, for outstanding reporting. Individuals must submit three of their best stories. Entry must also include a letter of support from their news director or editor describing why this individual deserves the award.

Best Spanish-Language Media Award – Print & Broadcast: An honor bestowed on two Idaho news outlets, one in print and one in broadcast media, for outstanding reporting. Submit three best stories. Entry may also include a letter of support describing why this reporting deserves the award.

Best Blog: Best regularly updated online column, by a single writer or small group of writers, in which items are posted in reverse chronological order. This award will focus on the overall content and quality of the blog, which may be attached to a traditional news outlet, or an independent effort focused on Idaho-related topics. Entrant should submit home page link and may also highlight individual entries from 2025 by including permalinks to those items.

Best Graphics: Best infographic used within a story, report, or program, in any media. Emphasis on ability to inform, as well as design and visual appeal.

Best Newsletter. Best periodic newsletter sent out by any Idaho news media outlet. Submit one to three examples per entry, along with a statement describing the purpose, frequency and reach of the newsletter.

Best Use of Drone: This award will recognize the best use of a drone in reporting in Idaho, on any platform, which may include print, broadcast, or online. Submit a copy of the article, broadcast, URL, or publication.

Media Innovation Award: This award is given for work by Idaho journalists, in any medium, that best makes use of innovative ways of reporting and presenting the material to the audience in ways that could not be done in the past. Submit a copy of an article, broadcast, or publication, along with a letter explaining the project or article and its impact.

Special Coverage: Comprehensive coverage of a special event, unusual circumstance, or issue that goes above and beyond normal news coverage. Please submit highlights of coverage along with a letter explaining the coverage and any supporting documents that help describe the news organization's approach. Entry may include a special section.

Best Online-Only Video news story: Video news story published online only. The judge will focus on the quality of production, interest, and value to the viewer.

Best Online-Only Video feature story: Video feature story published online only. The judge will focus on the quality of production, interest, and value to the viewer.

Best Online-Only Video Program- Public Affairs: A single video Public Affairs program that aired only online. May focus on an issue, subject, situation, or problem. Judging will focus on the quality of production, interest, and value to the viewer.

Best Online-Only Video Program- General: A single video program, not public affairs oriented, that aired only online. Judging will focus on the quality of production, interest, and value to the viewer.

Best Audience Engagement: This award focuses on the best use of audience involvement in a program or other activity. A short, no more than one-page, description should be included.

Best Use of Social Media: This award focuses on the best use of a Facebook page and/or Twitter account or other social media effort. Please provide a URL for your accounts and a short letter describing your efforts.