



Photographic Society of South Africa

Patronage C 2026/24

The Photographic Society of South Africa proudly presents the 29th National “Up-and-Coming” Photographic Competition

PSSA invites junior members of an affiliated PSSA Club (1 Star to 3 Star) and Scholars, whether they are PSSA members, to enter.

The main purpose of this competition is to create an opportunity for club members and scholars, who do not yet feel ready for National Salons, to compete in a national competition with their peers.

The competition includes a separate section for scholars up to the age of 21 whether they are from a recognised scholastic institution or are home schooled.

This competition will be conducted within the requirements and practices for salons as prescribed by the Photographic Society of South Africa.

CALENDAR

Closing date:	14 March 2026
Judging:	Completed by 28 March 2026
Result will be published:	10 April 2026
Winners:	The winning entries will be posted to the PSSA Website

To avoid disappointment and disqualification of entries please read this document thoroughly and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the convenor.

SALON DIRECTOR

Phillip De Lange APSSA, DPSSA (Cls), DPSSA (Vers) AFIAP

Mobile Phone: 078 863 9184

E-Mail: upcomingpssa@gmail.com

PHOTOGRAPHERS ELIGIBLE FOR ENTRY

SECTION 1: JUNIOR CLUB MEMBERS

Anyone who

- is currently a 1 to 3 Star worker and
- who does not hold a Star Rating higher than 3 Star in another club and
- is a member of an affiliated PSSA club and
- need not be an individual member of PSSA and
- who does not hold any honours titles from PSSA and
- who is not in the process of applying for any honours titles with PSSA is eligible to enter this section of the competition.
- A member who upgrades from 3 – 4 Star within 30 days of the Closing date may still enter. Proof of upgrade from the club will be required.

SECTION 2: SCHOLARS

This section is reserved **FOR SCHOLARS ONLY**

- who is a scholar from a recognised scholastic institution or are home schooled and
- scholars who are 1 to 3 Star member of a PSSA affiliated club and
- is not older than 21 years of age at the closing date and
- need not be an individual member of PSSA and
- who does not hold any honours titles from PSSA (except for a CoE) and
- who is not in the process of applying for any Honours titles with PSSA (except for a CoE – Certificate of Excellence)

NOTE – Entrants may **ONLY** enter in Section 1 **OR** Section 2.

ENTRY FEE

Entry to the competition is FREE.

AWARDS

- PSSA Bronze Medals will be awarded for the overall winner in each category.
- PSSA Runner-up Medal will be awarded for the runner-up in each category.
- Certificates of Merit will be awarded according to PSSA guidelines.

CATEGORIES

SECTION 1 – JUNIOR (1 Star to 3 Star) at a PSSA Affiliated Club

- A: **NATURE** – Manipulation is **NOT** Allowed - Colour
B: **OPEN COLOUR** – Manipulation is Allowed - Colour
C. **OPEN MONOCHROME** – Manipulation is Allowed - Monochrome

SECTION 2 – SCHOLAR

- D: **OPEN COLOUR** - Manipulation is Allowed - Colour
E: **PHOTOJOURNALISM & SPORT** Manipulation is **NOT** Allowed - Colour
F. **OPEN MONOCHROME** (DIGITAL & CELL PHONE) – Manipulation is Allowed - Monochrome

ADJUDICATION PANEL:

1. NATURE - Manipulation is NOT Allowed - Colour

Judge 1: Johan Frost FPSSA, DPSSA
Judge 2: Peter Cavanagh APSSA
Judge 3: Michelle Cloete LPSSA

Midlens PC
Midlens PC
Midlens PC

Judging to take place on 21st March at Middelburg

2. **OPEN COLOUR - Manipulation is Allowed - Colour**

Judge 1: Johan Drotsky APSSA, EPSSA

Bethal FK

Judge 2: Wilma Drotsky LPSSA

Bethal FK

Judge 3: Annelize Dell

Bethal FK

Judging to take place on 21st March at Centurion CC

3. **OPEN MONOCHROME - Manipulation is Allowed - Monochrome**

Judge 1: Veronica Heersink LPSSA

Kroonstad FV

Judge 2: Johann Kruger LPSSA

Kroonstad FV

Judge 3: Dalene Venter

Kroonstad FV

Judging to take place on 24th March at Kroonstad FV

4. **SCHOLARS - OPEN COLOUR - Manipulation is Allowed - Colour**

Judge 1: Leon Drotsky EPSSA(Mille-Platinum)

Ermelo FK

Judge 2: Christa Strauss LPSSA(Vers), DPSSA(Vers)

Ermelo FK

Judge 3: Adele Smit LPSSA

Ermelo FK

Judging to take place on 21st March at Ermelo FK

5. **SCHOLARS - PHOTOJOURNALISM & SPORT Manipulation is NOT Allowed - Colour**

Judge 1: David Benn FPSSA

CCJ

Judge 2: Mark Geldenhuys DPSSA

CCJ

Judge 3: Kittie du Plessis

CCJ

Judging to take place on 19th March at CCJ clubhouse, King Edward School, Houghton.

6. **SCHOLARS - OPEN MONOCHROME – Manipulation is Allowed – Monochrome**

Judge 1: Louis van der Walt

Sasol Highveld PC

Judge 2: Leon Pelser APSSA, LPSSA(Vers), EPSSA(CIs), AFIAP

Sasol Highveld PC

Judge 3: Danie Smit APSSA, DPSSA

Sasol Highveld PC

Judging to take place on 21st March at Sasol Highveld PC

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS

SECTION 1 JUNIOR

- Entrants **must supply the name of the club** they are a member of. Don't leave the "Nominated Photo Club" field blank or select "Independent" on the Photo Vault Online entry form.

SECTION 2 SCHOLAR

- Date of birth:**
 - Scholars who have previously registered on PhotoVaultOnline
 - must please update your account by going to "My Details" and ensure you have entered your date of birth.
 - Scholars registering on PhotoVaultOnline for the first time **must** include their **date of birth**.

This is a non-compulsory field but is required for this competition.
- Name of School:**
 - In "My Details" enter the name of your school (a non-compulsory field but is required for this competition) On the last line of the Address (just above the postal code).
 - Please check on the list of drop-down club name and if your school is registered with PSSA, please select it from the tab.

There is a detailed user manual available for download under the Help menu option.

SUBMISSION OF ENTRIES:

Four images may be entered per Category – Maximum of Twelve overall

Images must be in the following format.

- JPEG file format
- File size may not exceed 2.0MB
- Images must be resized to a maximum of 1920 pixels on the horizontal axis OR a maximum of 1080 pixels on the vertical axis.
- It is recommended that the image is converted to the sRGB colour profile to ensure correct colour rendition during display and adjudication.
- Borders are optional but must be within the size restraints above.

The competition uses the PhotoVaultOnline.com online entry system. Type the address <http://www.photovaultonline.com> in your browser and log in or register if you are not already a user.

Entry to the competition will be found under the Featured Events on the Home Tab.

MONOCHROME

Monochrome is a black and white image.

A black and white work fitting from the very dark grey (black) to the very clear grey (white) is a monochrome work with the various shades of grey.

A black and white work toned entirely in a single colour will remain a monochrome work able to stand in the black and white category.

A black and white work modified by a partial toning or by the addition of one colour becomes a colour work (polychrome) to stand in the colour category.

CATEGORY DEFINITIONS:

SECTION 1 JUNIORS

Category A: NATURE – Manipulation is NOT Allowed.

Nature photography records all branches of natural history except anthropology and archaeology. This includes all aspects of the physical world, both overwater and underwater. Nature images must convey the truth of the scene. A well-informed person should be able to identify the subject of the image and be satisfied that it has been presented honestly and that no unethical practices have been used to control the subject or capture the image. Images that directly or indirectly show any human activity threatening a living organism's life or welfare are not allowed.

The most important part of a Nature image is the nature story it tells. High technical standards are expected, and the image must look natural.

- Objects created by humans, and evidence of human activity, are allowed in Nature images only when they are a necessary part of the Nature story.
- Photographs of human-created hybrid plants, cultivated plants, feral animals, domesticated animals, human-created hybrid animals, and mounted or preserved zoological specimens are not allowed.
- Photographs made where the scene is natural and the animal is unharmed in a carefully managed environment, such as Zoo, rescue centers, and ethically managed natural environment farms are permitted.
- Attracting or controlling subjects using food or sound for the purpose of photographing them is not allowed. Maintained situations such as provided supplemental food due to hardship caused by weather conditions or other conditions beyond the animals' control, where photography is incidental to the feeding of the animal does not fall under this provision.
- Controlling live subjects by chilling, anesthetic, or any other method of restricting natural movement for a photograph is not allowed.
- Human-made elements shall be permitted under the following circumstances:
 - a When they are an integral part of the nature story, such as a songbird singing atop a fence post a man-made object used as nest material, or a weather phenomenon destroying a man-made structure.
 - b When they are a small but unavoidable part of the scene, such as an unobtrusive footprint or track in the background.

- c Scientific tags, collars, and bands are specifically allowed.

When photographing at a zoo, sanctuary, or rehabilitation center, it would be construed that the photographer ensured that it is properly accredited and conforms to best practices.

Original RAW File(s) with EXIF data intact of a series of JPEG will be requested from those Entrants who have initially been selected for the Medals and COM's.

Category B: OPEN – Colour – Manipulation is Allowed

In this category the subject is totally open. Monochrome images will be disqualified. All elements must be photographic; if graphic elements are included, they should enhance the photographic image but not take over from it. Any graphics used should be created by the photographer using his/her own artwork.

Category C: OPEN – Monochrome – Manipulation is Allowed

In this category the subject is totally open. Colour images will be disqualified. All elements must be photographic; if graphic elements are included, they should enhance the photographic image but not take over from it. Any graphics used should be created by the photographer using his/her own artwork.

SECTION 2 SCHOLARS

Category D: OPEN COLOUR – Manipulation is Allowed

In this category the subject is totally open and the images **MUST** have been captured with a digital camera. Monochrome images will be disqualified. All elements must be photographic; if graphic elements are included, they should enhance the photographic image but not take over from it. Any graphics used should be created by the photographer using his/her own artwork.

Category E: PHOTOJOURNALISM & SPORT - Manipulation is not allowed -Colour

Photojournalism entries are images with informative content reflecting the human presence in our world and emotional impact which usually include human interest, documentary, news or sport. The journalistic value of the image shall receive priority over the pictorial quality. In the interest of credibility, PJ images that misrepresent the truth and model or staged set-ups are not permitted.

Monochrome images will be disqualified.

Category F: OPEN – Monochrome – Manipulation is Allowed

In this category the subject is totally open. Colour images will be disqualified. All elements must be photographic; if graphic elements are included, they should enhance the photographic image but not take over from it. Any graphics used should be created by the photographer using his/her own artwork.

JUDGING

Presented images will be adjudicated via remote judging by 3 nominated judges on calibrated screens. Each image will be judged out of a total of 15 points per judge. The sum of the scores will represent the final score out of a total of 45.

If the adjudicators and/or the organisers reject an image as not conforming to the definition of the specific category or was entered into the incorrect section, the image will be disqualified.

CONDITIONS of ENTRY

1. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE:

AI-created images are **NOT ALLOWED** in this salon! Images created or altered by artificial intelligence are banned in PSSA Salons and Competitions. All parts of the image must be photographed by the author, who must hold the copyright and retain the original RAW/Unretouched JPG files with EXIF data intact. RAW files may be requested for any category.

The entrant accepts without exception and with no objection the following terms:

- that PSSA can investigate the submitted images to establish if these adhere to PSSA regulations and definitions even if the entrant is not a member of PSSA,
- Failure to Provide these will result in referral to the PSSA Salon Committee and inclusion on the transgression list.

Generative AI technology consists of:

- In-painting (where AI fills in generated elements not captured by the photographer or removes and replaces elements from a photograph with AI-generated content),
- Out-painting (where AI extends beyond the original boundaries of the photograph using generated elements); and
- Image-to-image AI (where AI transforms an entire photograph based on text prompts or style references)
- Text-to-image (where images are generated from scratch based on text entered into a prompt description)

AI features like clearing, de-noising, masking, sharpening, subject selection, tone adjustments, and upsizing are allowed in our competitions if they follow editing criteria and only include elements captured by the entrant. AI sky replacement is allowed if the entrant captured the new sky.

Taking inspiration from other photographers or artists is acceptable, but copying the original work's colour, composition, elements, perspective, angle, subject, and tone is not. Photographers must not capture screen images or photograph images found online and use them in their composite images for submission to salons, panels, or competitions. All post-processing of submitted images must be done by the entrant, except for scanning negatives and printing. Copying any part of someone else's image or artwork by tracing, sketching, etc., is prohibited.

2. **MANIPULATION:**

Manipulation is **strictly prohibited** in the Nature, Photo Travel, Street, Sport, and Photojournalism categories, as well as in any categories defined accordingly. Processing or editing must be limited to making the image look as close to the original scene as possible, apart from conversion to grayscale monochrome, which is permitted. Over processed images will be disqualified.

Editing techniques that are not allowed:

- Removing, adding to, moving or changing any part of an image, except for cropping and straightening.
- In Nature and Wildlife, **NO** vignette may be added.
- Blurring parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
- Darkening parts of the image during processing to hide elements in the original scene.
- All conversions other than to complete grayscale monochrome.
- Conversion of parts of an image to monochrome, or partial toning, desaturation or oversaturation of color.

Allowed editing techniques:

- Cropping, straightening and perspective correction.
- Flipping an image horizontal or vertical.
- Removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration and lens distortion.
- Global and selective adjustments such as brightness, hue, saturation and contrast to restore the appearance of the original scene.
- A very subtle vignette is allowed except in Nature and Wildlife.
- Complete conversion of color images to grayscale monochrome.
- Blending of multiple images of the same subject and combining them in camera or with software (exposure blending/HDR or focus stacking).

In the case of Nature exposure blending/HDR and focus stacking will not be considered as manipulation and may be used provided that the end result is a faithful representation of the original scene.

Exposure blending/HDR and Focus stacking are **NOT** allowed in Photojournalism.

- Image stitching - combining multiple images with overlapping fields of view that are taken consecutively (panoramas).

In Open categories and those where manipulation is permitted, there are no limits on how authors may choose to post-process an image.

The Salon Director will always request the original RAW/JPG file(s) with the EXIF data intact from those Entrants who have been initially selected for the Medals and COM's in the "NO MANIPULATION" categories. If the PSSA Salon Committee confirms that the image has not been manipulated, then the award will stand for those Entrants. The Salon Director and the judging team for that category will decide on the replacement images for the Medals and COMs in line with the recommended acceptance levels. Entrants will be allowed 4 days to provide the Original RAW/JPG file(s) where after the Entrant will not be eligible for Medals or COM's. Refusal to submit these will result in referral to the PSSA Salon Committee and inclusion on the transgression list.

3. Attach Proof of Payment (POP) in PDF format to your PhotoVault Online Entry. **Entries with insufficient fees or without**

POP will be rejected.

4. An image may be used only once in a specific salon, panel, or competition, regardless of the category or whether the image is in colour or monochrome. Similar images are not permitted. If an image appears in more than one category, the second instance of the image will be disqualified. Monochrome and colour variations originating from a single image are considered identical unless there is a substantial difference in artistic treatment. Additionally, similarity may occur when elements are replicated across different composite images.
5. Each image must have a unique name; the name of the image may **not** be altered as acceptance records are based on the image name. Titles such as "Untitled" and "No Title" are not acceptable, nor are titles consisting solely of camera filenames or numbers. Sanctions will be imposed if an accepted image or print is re-titled, or if different titles are used for Colour and Monochrome versions or Print and Projected Digital Image versions of the same image.
6. Entrants may submit up to four images in each PDI category and six in each print category of a national salon.
7. Images that were accepted previously in a National Salon by the hosting club or society cannot be entered again into their National Salon but may be submitted to an International Salon hosted by the same club or society. This rule also applies to International Salons.
8. Images that do not meet the category's definition or criteria will be disqualified by the judges.
9. The image must not display any title, watermark, or identification of the creator.
10. The salon does not assume responsibility for any copyright violations by the entrant.
11. Judges are not allowed to enter categories in which they are judging. If a judge enters any category they are responsible for, the images will be disqualified.
12. Family members (spouse, partner, parents, grandparents, siblings, children and grandchildren) can enter categories judged by relatives but cannot win medals (winner or runner-up).
13. Members of the judging club are not eligible for top awards (winner and runner-up medals), but can receive certificates of merit and/or special club awards for categories judged by their club. A club is classified as a judging club if its members make up most of the judging panel for the category in question.
14. The Salon Director and anyone involved in processing or accessing images may **NOT** serve as judges for the salon.
15. Entrant's images will be randomly distributed among categories for judging.
16. **NO** late entries will be accepted.
17. **DATA PROTECTION:**
By entering this salon, you consent to the personal details you have provided, including email addresses, being held, processed, and used by the salon organisers for purposes related to this salon. You also consent to such information being sent to organisations that have granted official recognition, patronage, or accreditation to this salon. You acknowledge and accept that the status and results of your entry may be made public.
18. **BREACH OF CONDITIONS OF ENTRY:**
The Salon Director can disqualify entries that do not meet the Conditions of Entry, including Definitions, before, during, or after judging and void any acceptance or awards. Fees will be forfeited. Entries violating ethics will be investigated by the PSSA Salon Committee who may impose sanctions, list the entrant on a sanction registry, and share findings with FIAP and PSA. The final decision to disqualify an image lies with the PSSA Salon Committee. Entrants agree to these terms.
19. You are entitled to appeal against a disqualification within 14 days after receiving your results. Appeals must be sent to the Salon Administrator at admin@pssa.co.za.
20. **Submission of entries signifies acceptance of these Conditions of Entry.**

PSSA WISHES YOU GOOD LUCK IN THIS COMPETITION