

Color Photography Guidelines

All entries must be created by the student(s). Submissions should reflect their original work and not simply feature students as actors or subjects.

Objective

To encourage the use of color photography in a creative and purposeful way to capture events, people, and the world around us.

1. Projects must adhere to all General Contest Rules listed on the Texas Youth Creator Awards website.
2. Projects will be limited to one color (or colorized) photographic print. **Photo collages do not qualify.** (Collages should be submitted to the Graphic Design division.)
3. If the final photograph has **significant editing, submit the original and the final product.**
4. **Statement of Purpose:** Write a brief statement in which you explain the purpose, inspiration, and process behind your work. Share what you aimed to communicate and how you approached creating your piece.

"I made this ___ because ___..." ; "I used the tool(s) ___..." ; "I did best on the part where ___..."
5. If artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used at any stage of the project, disclose their use by including the following statement:

"I used AI tools for specific aspects of this project, including: (Please list specific examples, such as getting ideas, checking grammar, creating designs, etc.). All AI-generated content was created under my direct guidance and supervision. I made all final decisions myself, and the project shows my own ideas and work."
6. Projects must credit copyrighted materials/sources including images, music, video clips, text, and AI tools. No specific citation style is required, but credits must be clear and complete.

Include:
 - Source name/title
 - Origin (website, author, platform, etc.)
 - Link (if available)
7. Entries submitted in a language other than English must include an English translation, transcript, or captions when applicable. This ensures that judges are able to fully understand and fairly evaluate the work.

8. **Submissions that cannot be viewed or opened due to permission restrictions or access issues will be disqualified.** To ensure submissions are accessible, it is strongly recommended that each project be tested by sharing it with individuals outside the submitting school or organization to ensure it can be accessed without issue.

By submitting an entry to the Texas Youth Creators Awards (TYCA), participants grant the Texas Library Association (TLA) and the TYCA Committee permission to share their work on the TYCA website, in online media, and in other promotional materials. Submitted projects may be used to showcase student creativity and promote the TYCA program.

Judging Criteria

Projects must be appropriate for school and public presentations. Entries will be judged on:

1. Creativity
2. Technical Quality
3. Post-Processing
4. List of tools used - including AI tools if used
5. Statement of Purpose

Post-processing: Editing and enhancing a photograph after it has been taken. Techniques include cropping, adjusting brightness and shadows, increasing saturation, etc.

See the rubric below for detailed judging criteria.

Texas Youth Creators Awards - Color Photography Judging Rubric

Category	Excellent (4 pts)	Proficient (3 pts)	Developing (2 pts)	Needs Improvement (1 pt)
Creativity	Composition is striking, and highly original; excellent use of color enhances the message or mood	Photo shows creative perspective or subject choice; color use supports the photo's impact	Some creative intent is evident, but execution or color choices feel predictable	Minimal creativity or intention; image lacks originality or visual interest
Technical Quality	Image is sharp, well-composed, and properly exposed with excellent lighting and focus	Mostly sharp and clear; minor issues with lighting or focus	Inconsistent image quality; noticeable issues with exposure, clarity, or composition	Poor technical quality with major issues that distract from the content
Post Processing	Post-processing enhances image significantly and is skillfully applied; edits are seamless If applicable - Original and final product images were provided	Edits are purposeful and add value, though may be slightly noticeable. Some editing is evident but inconsistent or distracts slightly If applicable - Original and final product images were provided	Some editing is evident but inconsistent or distracts slightly If applicable - Original and final product images were provided	Edits are excessive, poorly executed, or detract from the image quality If applicable - No original or final product images were provided
Use of Tools & Materials	A well-documented list of tools and materials used is provided. The project effectively integrates technology or materials to enhance the final product.	The project includes a list of tools and materials with good use of available resources.	Tools and materials are listed, but integration could be improved.	Missing or incomplete list of tools and materials; weak integration into the project.
Citations	All copyrighted sources (images, music, video, text, AI tools) are credited with name/title, origin, and link (if available). Clear and easy to match to content.	Most sources credited; minor details missing for 1–2 items. Generally clear and match content.	Some materials credited but several incomplete or unclear; missing multiple required details.	Sources are not cited, or citations are largely absent.

Texas Youth Creators Awards - Color Photography Judging Rubric

Category	Excellent (4 pts)	Proficient (3 pts)	Developing (2 pts)	Needs Improvement (1 pt)
Statement of Purpose	Clearly explains the purpose, inspiration, and creative process behind the work. Insightfully communicates the message and artistic approach.	Describes the intent and creative process with reasonable clarity; provides some insight into message or approach.	Provides a general explanation of the work, but lacks depth or clarity in purpose and process.	Incomplete, vague, or missing explanation of purpose and process; lacks reflection on creative choices.