

IAU's Office of Astronomy for Education Astrophotography Contest - Edition 2023

1. General

One of the goals of the IAU's Office of Astronomy for Education is to provide educators world-wide with high quality astronomy educational resources. One of said resources is a multi-lingual astronomy glossary where each concept is illustrated with a suitable image or video. While many astronomical phenomena can be depicted with publicly available images from professional observatories, we have identified some key concepts that can be better illustrated with images taken by astrophotographers, either experienced amateur astronomers or beginners in this field.

To fill this gap, the OAE is launching the third edition of this astronomy contest for a number of categories listed below. Images and time-lapses videos will be evaluated by a jury of astrophotographers and astronomy educators on the basis of their visual, technical, and educational value. Winners will be awarded cash prizes, and their entries will illustrate the OAE astronomy glossary under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License ([CC BY 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)).

Details on the categories, submission, prizes and other rules of the competition are described below.

2. Categories

1. There are 5 categories in this contest. The jury will select up to 3 winning entries in the first four categories listed below and up to 6 winners in the last category.
2. Below we describe the characteristics that the jury will value in each category. Given that the images and videos will be used for educational purposes to illustrate these astronomical concepts, submissions should adhere to these guidelines as closely as possible.

Still images of phases of Venus: Images of variations of light hitting Venus. The goal is to show that astronomical objects other than the Moon can be observed in phases from Earth. It can be single images or a mosaic of images showing different phases of Venus.

Still images of the day arc of the Sun and solargraphs: Images of the apparent trajectories of the Sun across the sky. The goal is to show how the Sun's path or day arc traces the apparent motion of the Sun in the sky as seen at a fixed location as our planet rotates around its axis and revolves around the Sun, illustrating the varying day length and Sun's altitude according to the change of seasons. Solargraphs can be captured with a long-term exposure set of solar arcs.

Still images of sunrise and sunset locations over the year: A mosaic of images showing the sunrise or sunset from a single location over different times of the year. The goal is to show how the location of sunset and sunrise change throughout the year.

Time-lapses of rotation of Big Dipper or Southern Cross: Time-lapses videos of either the Big Dipper in the Northern Hemisphere or the Southern Cross in the Southern Hemisphere. The goal is to clearly illustrate the Earth's rotation and apparent motion of the stars in the sky.

Still images with smartphones: Astrophotography images taken exclusively with smartphones/mobile devices. This can be of one of the categories above or any other topic. The goal is to highlight that high quality images can also be taken using popular devices instead of only fancy and professional cameras. **Please be aware of specificities for this category as noted in section 3.**

3. Eligibility

- 1. There is no restriction on the date when the images were taken. Images taken before the competition starts will be accepted.**
2. By submitting an entry, participants agree to these rules and guarantee to the OAE that:
 - a. the image/video is their own original work and was taken and processed by them
 - b. does not violate the copyright (or any other rights) of third parties

- c. does not include defamatory or obscene content
 - d. has written consent from any person that can be identified in the image/video
 - e. Group entries are allowed. In this case, each group must nominate one representative for the purpose of submission and subsequent communication. This representative must have the written consent of the other group members to submit that entry.
3. Some degree of processing and enhancing is allowed, as is common in astrophotography. But given the educational purpose of these images/videos, the jury might disqualify entries that significantly misrepresent the corresponding astronomical phenomena. In particular, **the following processing techniques are not allowed:**
 - a. Using different focal lengths for the foreground and background.
 - b. Foreground and background images at different locations, or at significantly different times of the day (the latest doesn't apply for the categories of the day arc of the Sun and solargraphs of sunrise and sunset locations over the year).
 - c. Any kind of manipulation, such as cloning or painting over the image.
 - d. Any kind of artificial intelligence usage.
4. Submissions with watermarks, names, copyright lines, or any text or marks of any kind are not allowed.
5. Members of the jury, OAE staff, OAE Centers and Nodes staff and their immediate relatives cannot submit entries to this competition.
6. NAECs are eligible to submit entries to this competition. If a NAEC is also staff of one of the OAE Centers and Nodes or jury, the previous rule (number 5) prevails.
7. Specificities for the category of Still images with smartphone:
 - a. Only photos taken **exclusively with a mobile phone or tablet** are accepted.
 - b. The use of telescopes and lenses are not allowed and will not be considered for evaluation.
 - c. The use of stabilizer systems, such as tripods, is allowed.
 - d. The submitted photo must contain EXIF data. Photos submitted without EXIF data will not be considered for evaluation. In case you are working with

star trails, deep sky stacking or any other similar techniques for which this is not possible to provide the EXIF data, the jury can request the original photos that include the EXIF information.

4. Submission

1. Images should be submitted as JPEG files with at least 2000 pixels along their widest dimension. This doesn't apply for the phases of Venus category since single frames of planetary cameras usually don't have a resolution higher than HD. Videos should be submitted in MOV, MPG, MP4 or AVI formats, and should be no longer than 3 minutes.
2. **Entries must be submitted by 30 June 2023 at noon CET.** Late submissions will not be considered.
3. Entries must be submitted via this [form](#). If you have any problems submitting your entries please contact us at astrophoto@astro4edu.org and we will try to arrange an alternative delivery system. Do not send your images or videos by email; submissions by email or any means other than the form above will not be accepted unless this has been explicitly agreed upon beforehand with the OAE.
4. When submitting your entry, you are asked whether you allow us to publish your image or video under a Creative Commons CC BY 4.0 license even if it doesn't receive a prize, as long as the image or video is considered by the jury as of high education value.
5. You can submit only one entry at a time. If you wish to submit multiple entries, you have to fill out the form each time.
6. Each participant can submit up to 10 entries in total to this competition.

5. Prizes

1. For the category still images with smartphones, the jury will select up to 6 winning entries, all receiving the same cash prize:
 - a. 100 EUR
2. For all the other categories, the jury will select up to three winning entries, which will be awarded the following cash prizes:

- a. First prize: 750 EUR
 - b. Second prize: 500 EUR
 - c. Third prize: 250 EUR
3. For group entries, the cash prize will be transferred to the contact person who submitted the winning entry.
 4. A given participant can have only one single winning entry in any of the categories, although he/she can have a winning entry in more than one category.

6. Judging

1. The OAE has appointed an international jury of astrophotographers and astronomy educators. Entries will be evaluated based not only on their aesthetic and technical merits, but also on their usefulness as educational resources to illustrate the corresponding terms in the OAE astronomical glossary.
2. The jury reserves the right not to award some or all the prizes in any category if they deem that no entries meet these requirements.
3. The organisers might contact participants in case of doubts regarding the veracity of their entries, and might request additional material such as raw images and EXIF data for verification purposes.
4. The decision of the jury on the winning entries is final.

7. Use of images/videos

1. All participants will retain the copyright on their entries. Winners grant the OAE the right to publish their entries under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0). This license allows anyone to share and adapt the images/videos for any purpose, even commercial ones, as long as proper credit is given. This human-readable summary of the license does not substitute the actual license, which can be found [in this link](#). Please read this license carefully.
2. Non-winning entries will not be published under this CC BY 4.0 license, unless participants agree to allow OAE to use their images even if they are not one of

the prize winners. We encourage participants to voluntarily release their entries under this license, [or a similar one accepted by Wikimedia Commons](#), to enrich the pool of multimedia resources available to educators.

3. To promote the OAE astronomy glossary in general and the winning entries themselves in particular, said winning entries will be published in various popular-level astronomy magazines worldwide.

8. Liability

1. By entering this competition, participants guarantee that they are the sole copyright owners of their images/videos. Should the OAE receive any right infringement claims from third parties, the affected participant will be required to compensate the OAE in full for any losses.
2. The OAE reserves the right to suspend or terminate this competition, to extend the deadline, and to adjust the competition rules.
3. These rules prevail over any other contradicting information found elsewhere, unless otherwise explicitly noted.
4. Should parts of these terms and conditions be ineffective or should there be a loophole, this shall not affect the effectiveness of the remaining parts. The invalid or missing parts shall be replaced by terms which come closest to the purpose of the contract and the statutory regulations.
5. The OAE is not liable for damages resulting from the impairment of the availability of the competition site in the event of technical disruptions and events of force majeure that cannot be influenced, or attacks by third parties against the competition site. The OAE will, however, try within the scope of its possibilities to guarantee the reliability and functionality of the competition site. However, the OAE does not guarantee that the competition site will function properly on the devices used by participants.

9. Applicable law

The OAE Astrophotography Competition is an undertaking of the International Astronomical Union (98-bis Blvd Arago, F-75014, Paris, France). As such, French law applies in the event of disputes. As far as legally permissible, the place of jurisdiction is agreed to be Paris.

10. Data protection

The OAE guarantees the highest possible standard of data protection within the framework of the competition and observes all relevant legal regulations. The OAE will not pass on personal data to third parties or sell address data. The OAE stores the personal data of the respective participants exclusively for the purpose of the competition. Participants hereby expressly declare their consent to the storage and use of the personal data provided for the above-mentioned purpose.