



APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR STAR RATINGS 1-5

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Part A – General Instructions	2
The basic applications process	2
Checking eligibility of acceptances	2
Image titles	3
Acceptances and titles required for Stars	4
Using acceptances gained before joining PSA	5
Using acceptances gain during a break in PSA membership	5
Basic application rules	5
Data accuracy and error correction	6
Star 5/Galaxy considerations	7
Star rating Certificates and Verified Records	7
Application fee	7
Credits for Annual PSA Division competitions	8
Acceptance credits – Judging or Chairing Exhibition	8
Part B – Specific Instructions for each Division and Class	10
Projected Image Division – Color Class	10
Projected Image Division – Monochrome Class	10
Nature Division	10
Photojournalism Division	10
Photo Travel Division	11
Pictorial Print Division – all Classes	11
3D Division	11
Appendix A – Definitions	12
Appendix B – Table of acceptance and title requirements	13
Appendix C – PSA Ethical Practices	14
Appendix D – Preparing an application	15
Appendix E – Format for claiming Acceptance credits	18
Appendix F – Format for claiming photo essay credits	18
Appendix G – Star ratings application checklist	19

INTRODUCTION

Star Ratings are the process that PSA uses to acknowledge members' acceptances in PSA-recognized international exhibitions. As each Star Rating is approved (Star 1, Star 2, etc.) a Star Ratings Award of Merit is issued. These certificates can later be used as proof of verified acceptances when a member applies for Recognition of Photographic Achievement awards (ROPA distinctions).

PSA is organized into six Divisions – Projected Image Division (PID), Photojournalism Division (PJD), Nature Division (ND), Photo Travel Division (PTD), Pictorial Print Division (PPD) and 3D Division. The Projected Image Division has two subdivisions called Classes – they are Color (PIDC) and Monochrome (PIDM.) The Pictorial Print Division has two subdivisions– Colour (PPDC) and Monochrome (PPDM).

When PSA gives recognition to an international exhibition each section of the exhibition gains its approval from a specific Division or Class. International Exhibitions that have sections recognized by PSA are listed on the PSA Web Site. Each exhibition is given a PSA recognition number such as 'PSA 2019-215'. Only acceptances received in *sections* of international exhibitions recognized by PSA can be used towards Star Ratings (in the Division or Class that recognized the section).

Only PSA members in good standing (membership current) can be awarded Star Ratings.

These instructions are divided into two parts. Part A is information that applies to all Divisions and Classes; Part B is information that is specific to the Divisions and Classes that have some additional special rules. Supplementary information to assist you with your applications is in the appendices.

Before proceeding, you should read the PSA Ethics Statement in Appendix C.

All applications for Star, Galaxy and Diamond awards are processed by volunteers. The time required for processing will vary according to the complexity of the application, the accuracy of the information supplied by the applicant and the workload of the SRD. Please be patient when waiting for your application to be processed.

PART A – GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

These instructions are for Star Ratings 1-5 in all Divisions and Classes. It is important that you understand all these instructions before you make any Star Rating application.

The Basic Application Process

To apply for a Star Rating, you must do the following:

- Complete a list of the **acceptances** that you want to claim – using the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* that you can download from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website.
- Complete a list of the image **titles** that you used for those acceptances – using the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet*.
- Email the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* to the relevant Star Ratings Co-ordinator. The names and contact details of the Star Ratings Co-ordinators
- are on the PSA web site.
- When your application has been approved you will be asked to pay the Star application fee.

Checking the Eligibility of Acceptances

1. When you enter an international exhibition, it is important to note the Division or Class that has granted recognition to the section you are entering because each Division and Class has a separate Star Path. *Acceptances gained in a section recognized by one Division or Class cannot be used in an application for a Star Rating in a different Division or Class.* For

example, acceptances in a PIDM recognised section cannot be used in a PIDC Star application; acceptances gained in a Photo Travel section cannot be used in a Photojournalism Star application, and so on.

2. Once an image has been accepted in an exhibition it cannot be entered again in that exhibition in the same Division or Class even if there are differently named sections in the Division or Class. For example, if an image was accepted in a landscape section recognised by PIDC in 2019, it cannot be entered in an open section of the same exhibition recognised by PIDC in a subsequent year.
3. Some exhibitions have both print and digital sections that are recognised by the same Division. For example, an exhibition might have a Nature Print section and a Nature Digital section. The same image cannot be entered in both sections of an exhibition in the same year. An image receiving an acceptance in one of those sections cannot be entered in the other section in a subsequent year.
4. If the same image receives acceptances in sections of different exhibitions that were recognized by different Divisions or Classes (for example, PIDC and Nature) the acceptances in each Division/Class can be used for Star Ratings applications in the relevant Division or Class. For example, if your Nature image called “Red fox” was accepted in a Nature section in the Southampton International and in a PIDC section in the Yorkshire International the Southampton acceptance could be used in a Nature Star application and the Yorkshire acceptance could be used in a PIDC Star application.
5. It is important to note that the subject matter in an image does *not* determine its eligibility for use in a Star Rating application. For example, if an image that satisfies the Nature definition is accepted in a PIDC section it is *not* eligible for use towards a Nature Star. It is the Division/Class that the image was accepted in that determines which Star Path it can be used in.

Image Titles

6. Each different image you enter in a PSA recognized exhibition must have a unique title.
7. A projected image and a print of the same image must have the same title.
8. Color version of a data capture and a monochrome version of the same data capture:
 - a. For Salons with a closing date prior to 1 August 2018, PSA Rules considered a Color version of a data capture and a monochrome version of the same data capture to be different images that must be given different titles. (Note: In 2012, a color version and monochrome version of the same data capture were required to have the same title.);
 - b. *For Salons with a closing date of 1 August 2018 or later, PSA Rules consider a color version of a data capture and a monochrome version of the same data capture to be the same image and both versions must be given the same title. (Note: Titles such as “Utah landscape” and “Utah landscape BW” are NOT the same – both versions of that image should be called “Utah landscape”.)*
9. Once an image has been accepted in a PSA recognized exhibition, that same image, or a like "in camera" or a "reproduction" duplicate of that image may not be re-titled for entry in that or any other PSA recognized exhibition even if it is entered in sections recognized by different Divisions or Classes. If you have inadvertently used two titles for the same image, tell the Star Ratings Co-ordinator when you apply for the relevant Star so that a decision can be made about whether those acceptances will be counted. For example, you might indicate that ‘Sunrise’ and ‘Pink Sky’ are the same image, inadvertently entered under different titles.

10. Exhibitors frequently append a number or letter after the text of the title to distinguish between different images (for example, “Red rose” and “Red rose 2”). This is permitted, but it is not recommended. The omission of this extra data is the most common error found in catalogs and other results notifications. This can cause problems on your Star applications.
11. The Conditions of Entry of some exhibitions place character limits on titles. Exceeding this limit can cause your title to be truncated in the catalog. This may result in your claim for a title or acceptance being rejected. If the title of your intended entry exceeds the character limit and it has already been accepted in another PSA recognized exhibition, regardless of which Division or Class recognized it, you cannot change its title. You will have to select another image with a shorter title for entry into that exhibition.
12. Initials and abbreviations can be used to reduce the title length and will be considered the same title as one with the words fully spelled out. If you submit a Star Ratings application with shortened titles, be sure to put the exact title that was accepted by the exhibition on your Acceptance List, but show the two titles that you had to use for an image on your Titles List. For example, on your Titles List show "Mountain Sunset Yellowstone National Park = Mtn Sunset Yellowstone NP" to indicate both titles are the same image. In these circumstances, only one of these titles will be counted towards the minimum number of titles needed for the Star award.
13. Do not use full words and abbreviated words to get different titles on your Titles List. This is unacceptable, and the titles will not be validated.
14. If you, or an exhibition organizer, have made a minor error in an image title you can indicate this on your Titles List in the following way: “Two little girl” = “Two little girls”.

Acceptances and Titles required for Stars

15. The Star Ratings in each Division or Class require a specific number of acceptances that have been achieved with a *minimum* number of different titles:

Star	Acceptances	Titles (minimum)
1	18	6
2	36	12
3	72	24
4	144	48
5	288	96

16. When you apply for Star 2 in a Division or Class where you already have Star 1, the titles and acceptances that you used for Star 1 in that Division or Class are included in the totals. For example, if you used 6 titles and 18 acceptances for Star 1 in PIDC, those titles and their acceptances would be part of the 12 titles and 36 acceptances that you can use for Star 2 in PIDC. When you apply for Star 3 in PIDC the titles and acceptances that were verified for Star 2 are included, and so on. This is shown in detail in Appendix B.
17. The table above shows that the average number of acceptances needed for each title is three. However, a Star Ratings application may use titles with only one acceptance. For example, Star 1 could be achieved with any of these combinations of titles and acceptances:
 - 6 titles, each with 3 acceptances
 - 9 titles each, with 2 acceptances
 - 18 titles, each with 1 acceptance
 - 3 titles, each with 1 acceptance, and 3 titles, each with 5 acceptances

Any other combination that used a minimum of 6 titles to give 18 acceptances.

Using Acceptances Gained Before You Joined PSA (effective 1 January 2019)

18. With the exceptions of the provisions described in the next two paragraphs, acceptances used in Star applications must have been gained while a member of PSA.
19. A member who has continuous membership may, without purchasing Stars Buy Back, use an *unlimited number* of eligible acceptances gained in exhibitions with a closing date up to *one year* prior to the date on which the member joined PSA.
20. To use eligible acceptances gained more than one year prior to joining PSA, the member must purchase **Stars Buy Back Years**. A separate document on the PSA Star Ratings webpage explains the Stars Buy Back scheme in detail.

Using Acceptances Gained During a Break on Your PSA Membership.

21. A member who rejoins PSA after a break in membership may use eligible acceptances from all or part of that period of non-membership by purchasing **Bridging Buy Back Years**. A separate document on PSA Star Ratings webpage explains the Bridging Buy Back scheme in detail.

Basic Application Rules

22. Applications for Star Ratings must be in English.
23. Applications must be made on the **Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet** that can be downloaded from the Stars page of the PSA website.
24. You may apply for more than one Star at a time in a single application, up to your 4th Star. For example, if your last approved Star in Nature Division was Star 2 you can apply for your 3rd and 4th Stars in Nature Division at the same time.
25. Unless you have received prior permission from the relevant Star Ratings Director, you cannot apply for your 5th Star in a Division or Class until you have been notified that your 4th Star application in that Division or Class has been approved.
26. If you apply for more than one Star at a time, do NOT separate your application for each Star level. Your single Acceptance List (on the New Acceptances page of the application spreadsheet) will start numbering from where the last approved Star left off and end with the requirements for the highest Star you are applying for. Your single titles list (on the New Titles page of the spreadsheet) will show all the new titles you are using for the application.
27. On each Star Ratings application, it is helpful to include *one or two extra titles* and their acceptances in case errors are identified in your application. Please note:
 - a. Do not include an excessive number of extra acceptances and titles on your application because this creates extra work for the Star Ratings Director and you may be asked to resubmit your application.
 - b. Validated extra acceptances and titles will be transferred to the Verified Acceptances and Verified Titles pages of the spreadsheet by the Star Ratings Director so that they can be used in your next Star application.
 - c. Your Star Rating Merit Award certificates will indicate the required number of acceptances and the minimum number of titles needed to achieve that Star level (regardless of how many acceptances and titles you had verified on the application).
 - d. Extra verified acceptances for used titles included on a 5th Star application will *not* be applied to the 1st Galaxy or any subsequent Galaxy because all titles for each Galaxy and Diamond rating must be new.

- i. If you include excess titles and acceptances on a 5th Star application, place them at the end of the lists rather than the normal alphabetical order so the Star Ratings Director can easily identify them and not verify them if they are not needed for your 5th Star. This will prevent you from losing them when you proceed to the Galaxy Awards.
- ii. Unused new titles and new acceptances will be set aside so that you can decide whether to use them on Galaxy applications.

Data Accuracy and Error Correction

28. The accuracy of information you submit on Star Ratings applications is your responsibility.
29. It is recommended that you maintain your master acceptance lists and titles lists as a spreadsheet in a format similar to the spreadsheets that must be submitted with your Star Ratings applications. You should update your data immediately upon receipt of official results from each exhibition. This will make it easier to sort your data, and to compile your lists at the time you apply for a new Star Rating. Backup your files in several places. Further suggestions for record keeping are given in *Guidelines for Using the Star Applications Spreadsheet* that you can download from the Stars page of the PSA website.
30. The principal source of information used to verify acceptances and titles earned after December 31, 2012, is the Exhibition Data Acceptances Spreadsheet (EDAS) sent to PSA by each exhibition organizer. If you are claiming acceptances gained prior to that date, you may be asked to supply alternative forms of reasonable proof of acceptances and titles (such as scanned pages of catalogues).
31. Exhibition organizers are required to send EDAS documents to PSA within 30 days of the judging. The data is then entered into the PSA acceptances database. You should refer to the Closed Exhibitions list on the PSA website to confirm that the exhibition has submitted its EDAS report before including an acceptance from that exhibition on a Star Rating application. When an EDAS has been submitted and uploaded, the name of the exhibition is highlighted in orange on the Exhibition List. Applications cannot be processed until all the relevant EDAS reports are received and processed by PSA.
32. It is your responsibility to check all information you receive from an exhibition and request corrections when errors are found. You should follow these steps for each exhibition that you enter:
 - a. Check the information you type in on-line entry forms. *Take particular care that you have entered your name correctly.*
 - b. As soon as you receive your official results, check that information for accuracy. If there is an error, immediately correspond with the exhibition chairman and ask for the corrections to be made *before* the exhibition sends the EDAS to PSA.
 - c. Check the accuracy of your results again when you receive or download the exhibition catalog. If any errors you previously reported have not been corrected, or if the information is not the same as your results notification, immediately correspond with the exhibition chairman and request a correction.
33. If an exhibition agrees that it made an error in the information it provided to PSA then you should request the exhibition to provide the PSA EDAS Director with the corrected data.
34. When you apply for Star Ratings, you will be notified of any discrepancies between the information provided to PSA by exhibitions and the information you provide. It is your responsibility to try to resolve these issues. This can be difficult, particularly if several years have passed between the date of the exhibition and the time you submit your Star Ratings

application. In exceptional circumstances, a Star Ratings Director may request that you provide other forms of reasonable proof of acceptances and titles. Report cards are not normally considered sufficient proof of acceptances.

Star 5 / Galaxy Considerations

35. Once Star 5 has been achieved in a Division or Class, all titles claimed and verified for Star 1 through Star 5 *in that Division or Class* are retired and those titles cannot be used for Galaxy or Diamond awards in that Division/Class.
36. The full rules for Galaxy and Diamond ratings are described in the *Galaxy-Diamond Application Instructions* that can be downloaded from the PSA website. It is important to note that there are limits on how many acceptances can be claimed for each title on Galaxy and Diamond applications.
37. You cannot apply for Galaxy 1 in a Division or Class until you have received notification that your Star 5 rating in that Division or Class has been awarded.
38. Star 1 to Star 5 Awards have a restrictions of claiming 20 acceptances per title. However, if you have a very large number of valid acceptances for some titles you may find that you reach 288 acceptances (the number needed for Star 5) but not have acceptances for at least 96 titles (the number needed for star 5). Any excess acceptances that you have for titles used in a Star 5 application will be lost – you will *not* be able to use them in a Galaxy application in that Division or Class. Therefore, it is advisable to think carefully about your exhibition entries as you approach the number of acceptances needed for Star 5 and make sure that you have acceptances for at least 96 titles.

Star Ratings Certificates and Verified Records

39. When you are notified that a Star application has been successful your application spreadsheet will be returned to you. Make a copy of that spreadsheet and use it for your next Star application.
40. If you apply for more than one Star on a single application (for example, Stars 1-3) you will receive an Award of Merit certificate for the highest Star Rating that is validated (Star 3 in this example). This certificate will be emailed to you as a pdf.
41. It is important to keep a copy of each application you submit, each Star Rating certificate you receive and any other correspondence you receive from the Star Ratings Director.

Credits for Annual Division Competitions

42. Some Divisions hold annual photo essay (or similar) competitions for PSA members only. The results are generally shown as a program at the annual PSA Conference. These annual competitions are not International Exhibitions and are not credited toward PSA's annual Who's Who in Photography. However, award-winning entries in these annual competitions are eligible to earn acceptance credits and title credits for Star Ratings 1 through 5 in the same Division or Class as the Photo Essay. Use of these credits towards Galaxies is dealt with in Galaxy-Diamond Application Instructions.
43. In PID, PJD, ND and PTD, each photo essay winning a Medal or HM receives four (4) acceptance credits and two (2) title credits when used in an application for Stars 1 through 5. The 3D Division has a Sequence competition that runs under different rules, so please refer to the 3DD section of the PSA website for details.
44. No more than eight (8) essay acceptance credits and four (4) essay title credits can be claimed in each Division or Class for any calendar year.

45. Refer to Appendix F for an example of how to format your Photo Essay credits on your Acceptance List and your Titles List. If in doubt, contact the relevant Star Ratings Coordinator.
46. You must include a copy of the official results email that you received from the Photo Essay Competition Director with your Star application.

Acceptance Credits – Judging or Chairing Exhibition

47. Some *acceptance* credits may be earned for judging a PSA recognized section or sections of an International Exhibition or for Chairing a PSA recognized International Exhibition. Credits for Judging are not new. Acceptance credits for Chairing were approved by the Board of Directors in September 2017 and cannot be claimed for exhibitions closing before that date.

Acceptance Credits - Judging

48. The Judging Credits earned for each exhibition section are entered in the PSA acceptances database after the EDAS reports are received. The number of Judging Credits that can be claimed for *each exhibition section* that is judged depends on the number of judges on the panel:

Size of Judging Panel	No. Judging Credits
3 judges	3 credits
More than 3 judges	1 credit

49. *Judging credits must be claimed in the same Division or Class as the section judged.* For example, if you were a member of a 3-person judging panel that judged both a Nature and a Wildlife section at the same exhibition you may be eligible to claim a total of 6 judging credits in the Nature Division.
50. All the Judging Credits earned for an exhibition do NOT have to be claimed on the same Star, Galaxy or Diamond application. Credits earned in a particular Star Path can be spread across different applications *in the same Star Path.*
51. Judging Credits can only be claimed if those credits were earned during a period in which the applicant was a member of PSA, or one year prior to the member joining PSA, or during the member’s Stars Buy Back or Bridging Buy Back period.

Acceptance Credits – Chairing Exhibition

52. For all PSA recognized international Salons closing on or after 1 December 2017 the person named as Exhibition Chairman in the related EDAS document can claim Acceptance Credits in accordance with the following clauses.
53. Chairpersons will be awarded three Acceptance Credits for each PSA Approved section in the Exhibition, up to a maximum of six credits for each Star Path. These Acceptance Credits can be used in the same way as Acceptance Credits for Judging.
54. For a circuit, the Chairing Credits will be awarded to the overall circuit Chairman (not to the Chairman of each exhibition in the circuit). Only one set of credits (set of credits equals 3 credits) can be awarded for each section in the circuit regardless of how many times that section is judged.

55. Chairing Credits can only be claimed if those credits were earned during a period in which the applicant was a member of PSA, or one year prior to the member joining PSA, or during the member's Stars Buy Back or Bridging Buy Back period.

Use of Acceptance Credits

56. The maximum number of Acceptance Credits that can be claimed for a Star Rating is 10% of the qualifying acceptances for that Star Rating or 25, *whichever is the lesser*. The cumulative maximum number of Acceptance Credits (both Judging and Chairing Credits) that can be claimed in each Star Path are:

Star Rating	Cumulative Maximum No. of Acceptance Credits that can be claimed
Star 1	2
Star 2	4
Star 3	7
Star 4	14
Star 5	25

If, for example, you are applying for Star 3 in Nature Division and you have not previously claimed any Acceptance credits in that Division, you can claim a maximum of 7 Acceptance credits. However, if you had previously claimed 4 Acceptance credits for Star 2 in Nature Division you could claim only an additional 3 Acceptance credits on your Star 3 application (to take the cumulative total to 7).

57. No *title* credits may be earned for Judging or Chairing International Exhibitions.
58. An Acceptance credit for an exhibition may be used only once.
59. There is no restriction on when Acceptances Credits can be used. They do not expire.
60. Refer to Appendix E for an example of how to format your claim for Acceptance Credits on your Acceptance list. You may have to provide evidence to support your claim for Acceptance credits. Normally this will be a scan of the cover and relevant pages of the catalogue for the exhibition at which you judged or Chaired. (Note: EDAS Files do record Judges and Chairperson.

Application Fee

61. The current fee for processing *each* Star Rating is shown on the Star Ratings webpage. There is no fee difference between USA residents and residents of other countries.
- If you are applying for more than 1 Star at a time, multiply the number of Stars for which you are applying by the fee for one Star.
 - Fees must be in *USA dollars only*.
 - The preferred method of payment is PayPal. You do not need your own PayPal account to pay via PayPal, just a valid Master Card, Discover, Visa, or American Express credit card; or a Visa debit card.
 - After the Director has verified your data and finalized your award level you will be sent an email with the PayPal link to make your payment. PayPal payments must be submitted using this link. Do NOT use a PayPal link provided for a prior application or for another Division, as your payment will not get credited.
 - If you are unable to pay with PayPal (perhaps because you live in a country whose government blocks the use of PayPal) please contact the relevant Star Ratings

Coordinator *before* you submit your application and arrange payment by an alternative method.

PART B – SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS FOR EACH DIVISION and CLASS

PROJECTED IMAGE DIVISION – COLOR CLASS

Acceptances earned in sections of exhibitions recognized by the Color Slide Division (CSD), the Color Projected Image Division (CPID), the Electronic Imaging Division (EID), and the Projected Image Division-Color (PIDC), can be used to earn any PIDC Star, Galaxy or Diamond award.

On the Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet there is a separate column on the New Acceptances Page and on the New Titles page where you can indicate the Division in which the acceptance was received.

If you had received Star Ratings in either EID or CPID there was an opportunity (up until 31st December 2017) to convert those Star Ratings to PIDC Star Ratings. If you had this type of conversion approved and you want to use ‘conversion credits’ on a new Star application in PIDC please contact the Senior Star Ratings Director at ssrd@psa-photo.org for instructions before you submit your application.

If you had acceptances in EID or CPID that were not used as part of a conversion to PIDC Stars you can include those acceptances on a PIDC Star application and indicate EID or CPID in the relevant column on the application spreadsheet. If you have any questions about this process, please contact the Senior Star Ratings Director at ssrd@psa-photo.org for instructions before you submit your application.

PROJECTED IMAGE DIVISION – MONOCHROME CLASS

The only acceptances that can be used in this Star Path are acceptances gained in sections of exhibitions that have been recognised by the Projected Image Division-Monochrome Class (PIDM). Acceptances from monochrome images entered in sections of exhibitions that have been recognised by the Projected Image Division-Color Class (PIDC) *cannot* be used in this Star Path.

NATURE DIVISION

The Nature Division has a single Star Path. Acceptances received in PSA recognized exhibition sections that are designated as “Nature” or “Wildlife” or a ND recognized theme section (such as “Birds”) can all be used on Star applications in ND. Acceptances received for both color and monochrome images in Nature sections can be included on the Star applications in ND. Acceptances received in both print and digital Nature sections can be included on the same Star application.

Acceptances for ‘nature’ images in other sections (such as PIDC) cannot be used on Star applications in the Nature Division.

PHOTOJOURNALISM DIVISION

The Photojournalism Division has a single Star Path, so acceptances received in PSA recognized exhibition sections that are designated as “Photojournalism” or “Social Documentary” or a PJ recognized theme section (such as “Sport”) can all be used on the same Star application. Acceptances received for both color and monochrome PJ images can be included on the same Star application. Acceptances received in both print and digital PJ sections can be included on the same Star application.

Under certain circumstances, the Photojournalism Division grants acceptance credits for published photographs – refer to the document on the PJD Star Ratings webpage for more information. If you have any questions about claiming Publications Credits, please contact the PJ Star Ratings Co-Ordinator *before* submitting your application.

PHOTO TRAVEL DIVISION

The Photo Travel Division has a single Star Path, so acceptances received in PSA recognized exhibition sections that are designated as “Photo Travel” or a PT recognized theme section (such as “People”) can all be used on the same Star application. Acceptances received for both color and monochrome PT images can be included on the same Star application. Acceptances received in both print and digital Photo Travel sections can be included on the same PT Star applications.

PICTORIAL PRINT DIVISION

The PPD has separate Star Paths for Color Prints and Monochrome Prints. Before 1 July, 2019, there will be four Star Paths. Before submitting an application in PPD please refer to the document on the PPD Star Ratings web page for examples of how to deal with acceptances received before and after the merger of these Star Paths.

3D DIVISION

As of April 2018, 3D Division no longer has a 6th Star. If you previously received Star 6 contact the 3DD SRD regarding conversion of this Star 6 to Masters. 3DD also has a series of Master awards instead of the Galaxy/Diamond awards available in other Divisions. The specific requirements for these 3DD awards are available in the 3DD section of the PSA website.

*If you have any questions about the specific requirements for a Division or Class it is important to contact the relevant Star Ratings Director by email **before** you submit your application.*

APPENDIX A: DEFINITION

Divisions. PSA is organized into six Divisions – Projected Image Division (PID), Photojournalism Division (PJD), Nature Division (ND), Photo Travel Division (PTD), Pictorial Print Division (PPD) and 3D Division. Except for PID and PPD, each Division has a single Star Path, regardless of the media (digital, slide, print) of the image.

Classes. Some of the PSA Divisions are subdivided into Classes. The Projected Image Division has two Classes; the Color Class (PIDC) and the Monochrome Class (PIDM). Prior to July 2019, the Pictorial Print Division had four Classes – Large Color Prints (CPA), Small Color Prints (CPB), Large Monochrome Prints (MPA) and Small Monochrome Prints (MPB). From July 2019 the Pictorial Print Division has two classes – Color (PPDC) and Monochrome (PPDM). When a Division is subdivided into Classes, each Class has a separate Star Path and you cannot mix acceptances in those paths.

Ethical Standards. Members applying for Star Ratings must follow the Ethical Standards set out in Appendix B of this document. Failure to comply with these standards may result in loss of PSA membership and/or loss of honors, distinctions and awards received as a member of PSA.

Star Rating. This is the process that PSA uses to progressively verify and acknowledge a member's acceptances in PSA recognized international exhibitions.

Star Path. This is the common term for a Division or Class in which Star Ratings can be earned. Each Star Path has a set of rules and conditions that must be met for a member to progress through the Star Ratings. The general procedures are the same in each Division and Class and they are described in Part A of this document. Some Divisions and Classes have a small number of special requirements in addition to the general procedures and they are described in Part B of this document.

Galaxy and Diamond Ratings. In each Division and Class (other than 3D) acceptances gained after a 5 Star Rating has been awarded can be applied toward Galaxy and Diamond Ratings (subject to specific rules). The requirements for Galaxy and Diamond Ratings are described in the GalaxyDiamond Application Instructions that can be downloaded from the Stars page of the PSA website.

Star Rating Award of Merit. As each Star Rating is approved a Star Ratings Award of Merit is issued to acknowledge the member's achievement. These certificates can later be used as proof of verified acceptances when a member applies for Recognition of Photographic Achievement (ROPA) distinctions.

Star Ratings Co-ordinators. These are the people in each Division who receive the Star Ratings applications and distribute them to the Star Ratings Directors. Their contact details are under the Stars menu on the PSA website.

Star Ratings Directors. These are the people who have responsibility for processing Star Ratings applications under the supervision of the relevant Star Ratings Co-ordinator.

Star Rating Application Spreadsheet. This is the Excel spreadsheet on which all Star Ratings applications are made. A separate spreadsheet must be used for each Division and Class. The spreadsheet can be downloaded from the Stars page of the PSA website. Guidelines for Using the Star Applications Spreadsheet can be downloaded from the Stars page of the PSA website.

APPENDIX B: TABLE OF ACCEPTANCE AND TITLE REQUIREMENTS**

Star Rating	Required No. Acceptances	<i>Minimum No. Required Titles</i>	Explanation / Instructions
Star 1	18	6	All titles and acceptances are new.
Star 2	36	12	<i>Retain</i> the 6 old titles and 18 old acceptances. <i>Add</i> 6 new titles and 18 new acceptances.
Star 3	72	24	<i>Retain</i> the 12 old titles and 36 old acceptances. <i>Add</i> 12 new titles and 36 new acceptances.
Star 4	144	48	<i>Retain</i> the 24 old titles and 72 old acceptances. <i>Add</i> 24 new titles and 72 new acceptances.
Star 5	288	96	<i>Retain</i> the 48 old titles and 144 old acceptances. <i>Add</i> 48 new titles and 144 new acceptances.

**NOTE: This table illustrates how you obtain Stars *in each separate Division or Class*.

APPENDIX C: PSA ETHICAL PRACTICES

The following ethics statement applies to all PSA members. Please read it and comply with it on all applications for Star Ratings.

A person participating in activities of the Photographic Society of America (PSA) or activities recognized by PSA shall act in accordance with all PSA policies, both as written and as obviously intended, without reservation. All participants shall be honest in performing and reporting services to the Society. Participants shall be ethical in making and presenting photographic images. Participants not in compliance with this ethics statement will be subject to sanctions by PSA, including loss of PSA membership and/or awards and honors.

Photographic Society of America (PSA) Ethics Policy Statement

1.
 - a. Images submitted to competitions shall originate as photographs by the entrant on photographic emulsion or acquired digitally. By virtue of submitting an entry, the photographer certifies the work, including the original capture, as his/her own, including any adjustments or editing of digital image captures*.
 - b. Each Image must have a unique title. Once an image has been accepted in a PSA-recognized exhibition, that same image, or a like “in camera” or “reproduction” duplicate of that image:
 - i. May not be re-entered in any section of the same Division in that exhibition regardless of media, format, or title.
 - ii. May not be re-titled for entry in any other PSA-recognized exhibition.
 - iii. Monochrome images and Color images from the same image capture shall be considered the same with the same title.
 - c. Images submitted in internal competitions, contests, workshops, study groups and the like shall strictly follow these standards, both written and as obviously intended, without reservation.
2. Information included in honors and awards proposals shall be exact and true.
3. Material submitted for possible publication in the PSA Journal and/or the PSA Website shall be solely the work of the author(s)*. Quotations from other material or gathered orally shall be carefully cited with credits given for all illustrations used, and permission use copyrighted material must be obtained by the author and included with the material submitted.

* Note: In this context, work of the maker means that the work does not include any material copyrighted by others or commercial clip art elements, including borders, graphics or photographs. Use of filters, such as those in Photoshop or third-party plug-ins such as those by NIK or TOPAZ to create such elements is allowed and is not considered a violation of this ethics statement.

APPENDIX D: PREPARING AN APPLICATION

All applications must be submitted on the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* that can be downloaded from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website.

You will need a separate spreadsheet for each Star Path. You cannot combine applications from different Star Paths (such as PIDC and PIDM).

The *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* is in Microsoft Excel format. Before using the spreadsheet, please read the *Guidelines for Using the Star Application Spreadsheet* which you can download from the Stars/ROPA page of the PSA website. This is particularly important if you do not have access to Excel, or if you are not familiar with using spreadsheets.

All Star applications will require you to enter data on these three pages of the spreadsheet:

Applicant page: This is where you enter your personal information (name, address, etc) as well as your *PSA joining date* and *Stars Buy Back date* (if you have taken advantage of the buy-back option).

Please check that all this information is the same as the information in the PSA member database. To do this, log in to the PSA website and select “My Account”.

New Titles List page: Here you must list of **all** of the NEW titles that you are using for this current application. *Do NOT include any titles that have previously been verified on a Star application in this Division or Class.*

New Acceptances List page: Here you must list of **all** of the NEW acceptances that you are using for the current application. *Do NOT include any acceptances that have previously been verified on a Star application in this Division or Class.*

In addition, you may have to enter information on other pages of the spreadsheet if you have previously had a Star application approved from a submission on a different type of spreadsheet or from a paper submission. The *Guidelines for Using the Star Application Spreadsheet* explain this in detail.

COMPLETING THE NEW ACCEPTANCES LIST

1. List all the new acceptances that you are claiming for this application. Do not include any acceptances that have been verified in a previous Star application in this Division or Class.
2. Please keep the columns in the order they are on the spreadsheet that you download from the PSA website.
3. It is important that Exhibitions are correctly identified using the exhibition name that is shown on the PSA website Under the Exhibitions>Closed Exhibitions menu.
4. Do NOT preface an exhibition name with the word “The”.
5. Do NOT preface the exhibition with 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc., or the exhibition year.
6. Do NOT put the year of the exhibition in the Exhibition column.
7. You MUST include the PSA recognition number when available. The correct format to use for the PSA recognition number is “2019-298”. You can refer to the PSA website’s exhibitions lists for all PSA recognized exhibition numbers from 2010 forward.
8. When listing acceptances earned from a circuit (for example DIGA or Trierenberg), DO NOT separate your data by the individual judgments. List all acceptances for the same title on consecutive rows.

9. When listing the country for a circuit that is judged in more than one country, enter the country that is shown on the PSA website for that circuit as the circuit will have just one PSA recognition number.
10. Closing dates of exhibitions determine the year of the exhibition on your Acceptances List, not the year of the judging date or the exhibition showing date.
11. The Acceptance Number column will start with “1” on your Star 1 application in each Division and Class. For your next application in that Division or Class the Acceptance Number column will start with the number that follows the last acceptance number on your last approved acceptance in the Division or Class.
12. DO NOT include any previous validated data from any previous Acceptance List. (There is an exception to this rule for PIDC applications that include CPID or EID conversions – please contact the PIDC Star Ratings Co-ordinator if you want to claim these conversion credits.)
13. Sort the rows of data first by Image Title (alphabetically A to Z), then by Exhibition, then by PSA Exhibition Number. The *Guidelines for Using the Star Application Spreadsheet* give detailed instructions about sorting if you need them.

COMPLETING THE NEW TITLES LIST

1. List all the new titles that you are claiming for this application. Do not include any titles that have been verified in a previous Star application in this Division or Class.
2. Check that all these titles appear on your New Acceptances List.
3. Sort the titles alphabetically.

WHAT YOU NEED TO SUBMIT WITH YOUR APPLICATION

What you need to submit with your application will depend on which of the following situations apply.

SITUATION 1 – An application for Star 1 or for multiple Stars including Star 1.

1. Download the Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet from the PSA website.
2. Complete all details on the “Applicant” page.
3. Complete the “New Titles List” page.
4. Complete the “New Acceptances List” page.
5. Email the completed spreadsheet to the relevant Star Ratings Director.

SITUATION 2 – An application for Stars after a previous application has been verified on the current *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet*.

1. Use the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* that the SRD returned to you when your previous application was approved.
2. Complete the “New Titles List” page (delete any data from your previous application).
3. Complete the “New Acceptances List” page (delete any data from your previous application).
4. Email the completed spreadsheet to the relevant Star Ratings Co-ordinator.

SITUATION 3 – An email application for Stars after previous Stars in that Division or Class have been obtained from an *electronic* submission on a spreadsheet that was different from the *Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet* that is now on the PSA website.

1. Download the Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet from the PSA website.
2. Complete all details on the “Applicant” page.
3. Complete the “New Titles List” page.
4. Complete the “New Acceptances List” page.
5. Copy your previously verified list of titles to the “Verified Titles List” page.
6. Copy your previously verified list of acceptances to the “Verified Acceptances List” page.
7. Email the completed Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet AND your previously verified application to the relevant Star Ratings Co-Ordinator.

SITUATION 4 – An email application for Stars when previous Stars in that Division or Class have been obtained from a *paper* submission.

1. Download the Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet from the PSA website.
2. Complete all details on the “Applicant” page.
3. Complete the “New Titles List” page.
4. Complete the “New Acceptances List” page.
5. On the “Verified Titles List” page enter the *complete* list of titles that were verified on your last approved Star application.
6. On the “Verified Acceptances” page enter the complete list of acceptances that were verified on each of your previous Star applications in this Division/Class.
7. Make a legible color scan of the signed/approved Acceptance List and Complete Titles list from each of your previously approved Star Ratings application in this Division/Class.
8. Email the completed Star Ratings Application Spreadsheet and the scan of your previous approval to the relevant Star Ratings Co-ordinator.

Note: You do not have to provide proof of membership when you submit your application because the Star Ratings Director will check this on the PSA Member Database. However, before submitting your application you should check that the information in the member database is exactly the same as the information on the ‘Applicant’ page of your application. This is particularly important if there is likely to be any confusion about your name. To check this information, log on to the PSA website and select “My Account”.

If you have any questions about these processes, contact the relevant Star Ratings Co-Ordinator before you submit your application.

APPENDIX E: FORMAT FOR CLAIMING ACCEPTANCE CREDITS

Judging and Chairing credits should be shown on your New Acceptance List in the following way:

Exhibition	PSA #	Country	Year	Acceptance Number	Title
Maitland	2016-002	Australia	2016	34	Acceptance Credit - Judging
Maitland	2016-002	Australia	2016	35	Acceptance Credit - Judging
Maitland	2016-002	Australia	2016	36	Acceptance Credit - Judging
Redlands	2016-138	Australia	2016	100	Acceptance Credit - Chairperson
Redlands	2016-138	Australia	2016	101	Acceptance Credit - Chairperson
Redlands	2016-138	Australia	2016	102	Acceptance Credit - Chairperson

If you claim Acceptance credits, you may have to send supporting evidence to the Star Ratings Director. This will normally be a scan of the cover and relevant pages of the exhibition catalogue. If this evidence is not available, contact the Star Ratings Co-ordinator before submitting your application and arrange to provide other evidence.

APPENDIX F: FORMAT FOR CLAIMING PHOTO ESSAY CREDITS

Photo essay credits should be shown on your Acceptance List in the following way:

Exhibition	PSA #	Country	Year	Acceptance Number	Title
PJ Essay Competition	2015	PSA Conference	2015	43	Award Credit-2015
PJ Essay Competition	2015	PSA Conference	2015	44	Award Credit-2015
PJ Essay Competition	2015	PSA Conference	2015	45	Award Credit-2015

If you claim photo essay credits, you will have to send supporting evidence to the Star Ratings Director. Contact the Star Ratings Co-ordinator before submitting your application and arrange to provide suitable evidence.

APPENDIX G: STAR RATINGS APPLICATION CHECKLIST

PSA Ethics Statement read and followed.		
“Applicant” page of spreadsheet completed and personal information checked on the PSA member database.		
“New Titles List” page completed, checked and sorted.		
“New Acceptances List” page completed, checked and sorted.		
Spreadsheet saved in the correct format with the correct file name.		
Any additional information (such as previously verified Star Applications) scanned and ready to send.		
Ready to pay fees with PayPal or have made other arrangements with Star Ratings Co-ordinator.		
Application and any other required information emailed to the correct Star Ratings Co-Ordinator using the contact details on the PSA website.		
PayPal payment made after the Star Ratings Director provided the payment link.		