WDA STUDENT AWARDS COMPETITION

The Wildlife Disease Association (WDA) annually offers four student awards. Eligible students[a] are encouraged to compete for the following award:

WDA Student Poster Award
This award acknowledges outstanding student poster presentation of research findings at the annual international WDA conference. The overall winner of the Best Student Poster Presentation receives an award and US$350 (to offset conference expenses). The second-place winner (Honorable Mention) receives an award and US$250 (to offset conference expenses).

[a]**Eligibility:**

Applicants for all WDA awards must be *students* AND members of the WDA. Confirm your WDA membership status or join now via the WDA website:

WDA ***student*** definition: 1) enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate student program at least half-time, or 2) be participating full-time in an internship or residency program which is approved for credit towards board certification or graduate degree.

Applicants for the WDA Graduate Student Research Recognition Award (SRRA) & WDA Graduate Student Scholarship Achievement Award (SSA) must be pursuing an advanced (graduate) degree at the time of application. Exception: Students who have completed their graduate programs are eligible to submit applications for the WDA Graduate SRRA up to the 1st annual international WDA conference occurring after the completion of their studies.

Applicants for WDA Terry Amundson Student Presentation Award must be WDA members and students at the time abstracts are received.

All WDA student awards are non-renewable, and each award may be received only once by a given candidate. Students can compete for as many awards as they like each year. However, there are restrictions to which awards can be awarded to the same student within the same calendar year (see table 1: Student Award Eligibility within the same calendar year). All awards will be presented at the annual international WDA conference.

Please direct inquiries to: WDA Student Awards Subcommittee at **student.awards@wildlifedisease.org**

Table 1: Student Award Eligibility within the same calendar year

	Graduate Student Scholarship Achievement Award (SSA)	Graduate Student Research Recognition Award (SRRA)	Terry Amundson Student Presentation Award (Two awards: Winner & Honourable mention)	Student Poster Presentation Award (Two awards: Winner & Honourable mention)	Student Travel Grant
Graduate Student Scholarship Achievement Award (SSA)					
Graduate Student Research Recognition Award (SRRA)	The winner of the SRRA **cannot** be awarded the SSA in the same calendar year.				
Terry Amundson Student Presentation Award (Two awards: Winner & Honourable mention)	The Terry Amundson Student Presentation Awards **can** be awarded to the winner of the SSA in the same calendar year. However, if the SSA winner is awarded a Terry Amundson Student Presentation Award, then they are **not eligible** to win a poster presentation award.	The winner of the SRRA is the student plenary speaker at annual international WDA conference and therefore is **not eligible** to be scored for the Terry Amundson Student Presentation Award.			
Student Poster Presentation Award (Two awards: Winner & Honourable mention)	The Student Poster Presentation Award **can** be awarded to the winner of the SSA. However, if the SSA winner is awarded a Terry Amundson Student Presentation Award, then they are **not eligible** to win a poster presentation award.	The winner of the SRRA is the student plenary speaker at annual international WDA conference and therefore is **not eligible** to be scored for the Student Poster Presentation Award.	The Student Poster Presentation Award **can** be awarded to the same student as the Terry Amundson Student Presentation Award. However, if the SSA winner is awarded a Terry Amundson Student Presentation Award, then they are **not eligible** to win a poster presentation award.		
Student Travel Grant[b]	The winner of the SSA is awarded funds that can be used to travel to the annual international WDA conference and therefore is **not eligible** to be awarded the Student Travel Grant.	The winner of the SRRA is awarded funds to travel to the annual international WDA conference and therefore is **not eligible** to be awarded the Student Travel Grant.	The Student Travel Grant **can** be awarded to the same student as the Terry Amundson Student Presentation Award.	The Student Travel Grant **can** be awarded to the same student as the Student Poster Presentation Award.	

[b]Student Travel Grant winners are NOT determined by the Student Awards Committee (SAwC). These are awarded by the WDA Student Activities Committee.
SAwC Chair informs WDA Student Activities Committee of the SSA and SRRA awardees.

Detailed Application Instructions

Wildlife Disease Association Student Poster Award

DEADLINE: The deadline for submission of student abstracts to be considered for this award will be identical to the deadline set for the non-student abstracts. The deadline for the call for abstracts for poster presentations is **January 15, 2027**.

This award acknowledges outstanding student poster presentation of research findings at the annual international WDA conference. The overall winner of the Best Student Poster Presentation receives an award and US$350 (to offset conference expenses). The second-place winner (Honorable Mention) receives an award and US$250 (to offset conference expenses).

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY:

Applicants must be *students* AND members of the WDA at the time abstracts are received.

Confirm your WDA membership status or join now via the WDA website.

WDA *student* definition: 1) enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate student program at least half-time, or 2) be participating full-time in an internship or residency program which is approved for credit towards board certification or graduate degree.

APPLICATON CRITERIA AND PROCESS:

To be considered for this award at the conference, eligible students **must submit an abstract and along with the following items** via the annual international WDA conference website to have your abstract considered for the student oral presentation competition.

- Proof of student status (e.g., enrollment in a degree program, internship or residency)
- Proof of current WDA membership status (e.g., copy of paid membership confirmation or screenshot of current membership profile on the WDA website)

In addition, the student must also be available to present their research to the annual international WDA conference audience during the student poster presentation session. If the student (presenting author) is not available to present, they must withdraw their abstract. Co-authors cannot present on behalf of the student presenting author, regardless of their student status.

The student abstract should follow the general abstract guidelines as outlined on the annual international WDA conference website. In addition, students submitting abstracts to be considered for the student presentation awards should read the **and Oral / Poster Presentation Scoring Criteria** prior to submitting an abstract. These criteria will be used to score abstract on a competitive basis to determine which will be chosen for the conference. These criteria will be used to score abstract on a competitive basis to determine which will be chosen for the conference.

PLEASE NOTE*

1. Students can submit as many abstracts as they like.
2. A maximum of ONE abstract will be accepted per student for each presentation modality (e.g. maximum of 1 oral presentation and 1 poster presentation per student). If a student has submitted multiple abstracts and multiple abstracts score high enough to be accepted for presentation, the top-ranking abstract will be selected.
3. Only the top 25 poster abstracts will be eligible to be judged at the conference for the Poster Presentation Award. Student abstracts that do not make the top 25, may still be selected to present at the conference if space allows but will not be judged for the student poster presentation award. You will be notified as to whether or not your poster has been 1) accepted for presentation and 2) if it has been selected for judging at the conference.
4. WDA aims to accept as many poster presentations as possible. However, as poster space may be limited, not all poster abstracts will be accepted.
5. If you indicate that you wish for your abstract to be considered for the student competition and it is not selected, your abstract will NOT be considered for presentation for the general sessions.

PRESENTATION SCORING CRITERIA

Student POSTER PRESENTATION Scoring Criteria

During the Student Poster Presentations, students are requested to be at their poster to answer questions and interact with the judges.

STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO BRING *AT LEAST 8 COPIES* OF AN A4/LETTER sized VERSION OF THEIR POSTER TO PROVIDE TO JUDGES.

Students will be scored on the following criteria with a numerical score: 4 (excellent), 3 (good), 2 (average), 1 (poor), 0 (unacceptable)

PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE ABSTRACTS ON YOUR POSTER. THESE WILL NOT BE GRADED.

1. **Background** – the poster provides adequate introduction and background to set the stage for the study. **(max 4 points)**
2. **Aims/Hypothesis** – the poster lists the hypothesis(es) to be tested and aims of study are presented in a clear and concise manner. **(max 4 points)**
3. **Methods** – the poster presents the methods clearly and concisely and the methods are adequate to test hypothesis(es) and address objectives of study. **(max 4 points)**
4. **Results** – the poster presents the results in a clear and concise manner and the results are directly related to methodology. **(max 4 points)**
5. **Conclusions** – the poster includes conclusions that are sound, logical, and supported by data presented in results section. **(max 4 points)**
6. **Visual Aids** – Students are encouraged to follow the better poster format (Examples of templates are included here). This format does not include an abstract. Poster is well organized, logical, easily read and interpreted, and figures/images/tables are adequate, large enough, appropriate, and of high quality. **(max 4 points)**
7. **Student "knowledge"** –The student is interactive and demonstrates sound knowledge of the contents of the poster. **(max 4 points)**
8. **Innovation/Significance** – the study involves a novel approach or addresses a novel topic, and/or relates to a significant problem in the wildlife health/wildlife disease arena. **(2-meets the criteria very strongly, 1-meets the criteria to some extent, 0-does not meet the criteria)**

Students can obtain a maximum of 30 points. A final score will be calculated as the mean of the individual judge's scores.