



CATEGORY GUIDELINES

Section I

ACT-SO Program Overview

ACT-SO Mission

ACT-SO is a major youth initiative of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Founded in 1978, by renowned author and journalist, Vernon Jarrett, ACT-SO provides a forum through which youth of African descent demonstrate academic, artistic, and scientific prowess and expertise, thereby gaining the same recognition often only reserved for entertainers and athletes.

ACT-SO is rooted in the firm conviction that African-Americans can succeed and compete at the same or superior levels as their counterparts in classrooms, boardrooms, and laboratories across this nation and abroad. The mission of ACT-SO is to prepare, recognize, and reward youth of African descent who exemplify scholastic and artistic excellence. ACT-SO goals are:

- To mobilize the adult community for the promotion of academic and artistic excellence among students of African descent.
- To recognize academic and artistic achievement among students of African descent.
- To provide and assist students with the necessary skills to establish goals and acquire the confidence and training to make a successful contribution to society.

ACT-SO Fact Sheet

WHAT IS ACT-SO?

ACT-SO is a yearlong youth achievement enrichment program designed to recruit, stimulate, improve and encourage high academic and cultural achievement among high school students of African descent. The ACT-SO program centers on the dedication and commitment of community volunteers and business leaders to serve as mentors and coaches to promote academic and artistic excellence. There are 27 categories of competition in the sciences, humanities, performing arts, visual arts and business.

WHO SPONSORS ACT-SO?

ACT-SO is sponsored by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), which is the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization. ACT-SO receives support from schools, community organizations, churches, foundations, private corporations, and individuals.

WHO FOUNDED ACT-SO?

Vernon Jarrett, a renowned author and journalist, initiated the idea of a program that would promote and reward academic achievers the same way sports heroes are honored. The first national ACT-SO competition was held in 1978 in Portland, Oregon.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO PARTICIPATE?

High school students of African descent, who are citizens of the United States, enrolled in grades 9-12 and are amateurs in the categories of competition are able to participate.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN ACT-SO?

The ACT-SO program is intended to be a learning experience, first and foremost. The focus of a viable and effective local ACT-SO program is on enrichment and mentorship. Students work with ACT-SO mentors who help them develop projects throughout the year. Local ACT-SO programs also provide ACT-SO students with enrichment opportunities, such as workshops, tutorials, and field trips.

The benefits ACT-SO students receive from the enrichment and mentorship components include substantial assistance toward the development of their ACT-SO projects and valuable tools to assist them throughout their education.

Each ACT-SO program conducts a local competition. The local competition serves to showcase the hard work students have put in all year long. Students receive medals and prizes provided by the local and regional sponsors and contributors. ACT-SO Students who receive gold medals on the local level then compete at the National Competition where they receive scholarships and other rewards provided by national sponsors.

Section II:

ACT-SO Category Descriptions

List of Categories

Business

- Entrepreneurship
- Culinary Arts

Humanities

- Music Composition
- Playwriting
- Poetry
- Short Story

Performing Arts

- Dance
- Dramatics
- Music: Instrumental (Classical)
- Music: Instrumental (Contemporary)
- Music: Vocal (Classical)
- Music: Vocal (Contemporary)
- Oratory

Sciences

- Biology/Microbiology
- Chemistry/Biochemistry
- Computer Science
- Earth and Space Sciences
- Engineering
- Mathematics
- Medicine and Health
- Physics

Visual Arts

- Architecture
- Drawing
- Filmmaking
- Painting
- Photography
- Sculpture

The Visual Arts

ARCHITECTURE

The science, art or profession of designing buildings or outdoor spaces.

DRAWING

The art of representing forms and figures on a surface by means of lines executed by hand and or computer (digital) generated process.

FILMMAKING

The art and process of making motion pictures.

PAINTING

The art of laying mediums on a surface with a brush, knife, or hand and/or the manipulation of digital processes with a computer.

PHOTOGRAPHY

The process, art and technique of taking images recorded by a camera and reproducing them on a photosensitive surface.

SCULPTURE

The art of making three-dimensional figures or designs.

Architecture

Plans for and models of structures and outdoor spaces.

Examples may include but are not limited to: Building designs, landscape designs, interior designs, urban plans. Can include 2D work such as hand-drawn sketches, computer-aided designs, blueprints, and floor plans, OR 3D work such as scale models made from foam core, balsa wood, cardboard, wooden blocks, polystyrene, found or reused objects, etc.

REQUIREMENTS:

6. Only one (1) original project may be submitted. The project must be the creation of the competing contestant, rather than a replication of another architect's design.
7. Six (6) copies of a typed 8-½ inch by 11-inch double-spaced paper must accompany the project. The content of the paper, which should not exceed five (5) pages, should include overall statement of goals and processes, design objectives, the history of the project and execution of the project. The student's name, page number and branch must be on the top of each page. The six (6) copies of the paper must be submitted on or before the deadline specified.
8. Blueprints of the project must be 24 x 36 inches in length or width. The contestant must also submit a site plan, floor plan, a minimum of two (2) elevations and a section of the design at appropriate scale.
9. Contestants are required to conduct a minimum five (5) minutes oral presentation, explaining his/her project. This time limit does not include the time required for the judges to ask questions and the contestant to respond to the judges.
10. Contestants are required to construct a scaled model of his or her project. (Display tables and electricity will be provided by the national office.)
11. Contestants must submit a Verification form from a qualified architect with an earned professional degree or license. This person can also serve as a coach, working closely with the student during the course of the project to ensure the accuracy of the student's research and qualification for entry.
12. Gold medalists advancing to the National Competition level will be required to upload images of their entries to a designated site.

Architecture Continued

NOTE: The deadline for submission of National registration documents is the first Friday in May. No materials or copies will be accepted at the National Competition

Contestants Will Be Judged By The Following Criteria:

- **Complexity of Project/Originality** (15 pts)
- **Planning and Space Concepts** (10 pts)
- **Aesthetics** (10 pts)
- **Consistency and Validity of Design Concepts** (10 pts)
- **Drawings** (15 pts)
 - 1. Quality of line work,
 - 2. Organization of drawings
- **Model** (10 pts)
 - Workmanship, Scale
- **Site Analysis/Design** (15 pts)
 - Construction Materials/Methods of Construction (5 pts)
- **Written Statement** (5 pts)
 - Explaining Project, Establishing Parameters
 - Identifying Project Limitations and Design Objectives
- **Verbal Presentation** (5 pts)

Drawing

The art of representing forms and figures on a surface by means of lines executed by hand or computer (digital) generated processes.

REQUIREMENTS:

13. Only one (1) project can be submitted.
14. The National Office will provide easels.
15. The contestant is required to make an oral presentation, which will not exceed three (3) minutes, explaining the methods or techniques used in developing the project. Mounting and matting is preferred.
16. The submission should be no larger than 36 inches by 48 inches. Framing is optional.
17. The oral presentation must not exceed three (3) minutes.
18. Gold medalists advancing to the National Competition level will be required to upload images of their entries to a designated site.

NOTE: The deadline for submission of National registration documents is the first Friday in May. No materials or copies will be accepted at the National Competition

Contestants Will Be Judged By The Following Criteria:

- **Composition** (20 pts)
- **Line/Form** (20 pts)
- **Presentation** (20 pts)
- **Technique/Craftsmanship** (20 pts)
- **Theme** (20 pts)

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Place Holder for Filmmaking

Place Holder for Filmmaking

Painting

Art created by applying pigment on a two-dimensional surface with a brush, knife, or hand and/or the manipulation of digital processes with a computer

Examples include but are not limited to: Oil, acrylic, watercolor, gouache, tempera, ink, encaustic, fresco, spray paint, etc. applied on canvas, canvas board, paper or any flat surface.

REQUIREMENTS:

19. Only one (1) project can be entered.
20. The National Office will provide easels.
21. The contestant is required to make an oral presentation, which will not exceed three (3) minutes, explaining the methods or techniques used in developing the project.
22. The contestant must be available to answer questions from the judges.
23. The submission should be no larger than 36 inches by 48 inches. Framing is optional.
24. Gold medalists advancing to the National Competition level will be required to upload their entries to a designated site.

NOTE: The deadline for submission of National registration documents is the first Friday in May. No materials or copies will be accepted at the National Competition

Contestants Will Be Judged By The Following Criteria:

- Color (20 pts)
- Composition (20 pts)
- Craft (20 pts)
- Line/Form (20 pts)
- Theme (20 pts)

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Photography

The process, art and technique of capturing images with an analog or digital camera

Examples include but are not limited to: Black and white photographs, color photographs, digital or analog photographs, photograms, other experimental photography, etc.

REQUIREMENTS:

25. No more than six (6) photographs can be submitted or one (1) collage of work.
26. The photographs and/or mounting boards must be no larger than 20x16 inches and mounted on white, black, or gray color boards.
27. The contestant is required to make a minimum three (3) minute oral presentation, explaining the methods or techniques used in developing the project.
28. The National Office will provide display tables.
29. Gold medalists advancing to the National Competition level will be required to upload their entries to a designated site.

NOTE: The deadline for submission of national registration documents is the first Friday in May. No materials or copies will be accepted at the National Competition

Contestants Will Be Judged By The Following Criteria:

- Cleanness (25 pts)
- Composition (25 pts)
- Effective use of Light (25 pts)
- Theme (25 pts)

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Sculpture

The art of making three-dimensional forms or designs.

REQUIREMENTS:

30. Only one (1) project can be entered.
31. The National Office will provide display table space.
32. Each contestant is required to make an oral presentation explaining the methods or techniques used in developing the project not to exceed three (3) minutes.
33. Craft projects (i.e. ceramics, macramé, etc.) will not be accepted.
34. Gold medalists advancing to the National Competition level will be required to upload images of their entries to a designated site.

NOTE: The deadline for submission of national registration documents is the first Friday in May. No materials or copies will be accepted at the National Competition.

Contestants Will Be Judged By The Following Criteria:

- Concept (20 pts)
- Composition (20 pts)
- Craftsmanship (20 pts)
- How well the medium was applied (20 pts)
- Dimensional Form (20 pts)

G. Point System

Each Contestant may receive up to a total of 100 points. Points are issued to a contestant based on a specific set of criteria, which is outlined in the Category Description section of the manual.

When identifying competition winners, all scores must fall in the following range:

GOLD 100 - 95 POINTS

SILVER 94 - 90 POINTS

BRONZE 89 - 85 POINTS

In the event all scores fall within the same range (i.e., 99 Gold, 98 Silver, 97 Bronze) rank the scores in sequential order with the highest score first.

- All ties are broken by the judges.
- One (1) point should be deducted for each infraction of the specified criteria.
- Based on the point system it is possible to not have a gold medal winner on the local level. The judges alone following the specified category criteria and using the point system will determine the winner.
- In extenuating circumstances, the silver medal winner may replace the gold medal winner if the silver medal winner's scores fall within the 95-100 gold medal range.

NOTE: Students who do not have a cumulative score between 95-100 are NOT considered Gold Medalists and will not be allowed to compete at the National Competition.